Hafa Adai!

SUNDAY

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 272 | SEPTEMBER 28, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you believe the federal government should step in and help resolve the crisis surrounding CUC?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Tropical Theme

Lounging in the back yard of Edward Sorano and Scott Ellis, you can imagine yourself at a tropical resort.

HOUSEKEEPING...Page 10

Return to Hell

At 81, a Japanese veteran makes a rare return to Iwo Jima.

FOCUS...Page 19

Chameleon

Keira Knightley rolls her molasses-brown eyes and starts to gasp as though she's choking on a fish bone.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Although the murder charge is barred by double jeopardy, the state may proceed on the charge of conspiracy to commit murder because there is no evidence that Miura was previously acquitted or convicted of the same offense in Japan.

—Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Steven Van Sicklen

Murder charge vs Miura dropped

But judge lets conspiracy charge to proceed to trial

By THOMAS WATKINS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Miura

TORRANCE, California (AP)—A judge ruled Friday that Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura cannot be tried for murder in the 1980s shooting death of his wife, but prosecutors may proceed with a charge of conspiracy to commit murder.

The ruling by Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Steven Van Sicklen came after he had considered a defense motion to quash Miura's arrest warrant. Miura, 61, is in custody in the U.S. territory of Saipan.

See MIURA on Page 4

Villagomez's 3rd request to extend deadline OK'd

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Villagomez

The federal court has granted Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez's third request to grant him an extension on the deadline to file pre-trial motions.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson ordered Villagomez to file his pre-trial motions no later than 3:30pm on Nov. 10, 2008.

Munson allowed the new deadline extension following a stipulation entered by Villag-

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Bush to expand Calif. sanctuary

The Monterey Bay marine sanctuary off California's coast will expand its borders to include one of the largest undersea mountains in U.S. waters, President Bush announced Friday.

Speaking before the Smithsonian's new Ocean Hall exhibit in Washington, D.C., Bush pledged to proceed with the long-awaited expansion of the sanctuary to include the Davidson Seamount, a dormant undersea volcano,

See UNDERSEA on Page 4

Bush

TREE PLANTING JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Children from the Guam delegation plant a tree on behalf of Guam Gov. Felix Camacho at the Man'amko Center/Office of Aging in Garapan in honor of the 3rd annual Chamorro Conference yesterday. ***See story and more pictures on Page 4.***

PSS' Sablan: There is no money to pay CUC. **PAGE 2**
USCG plans rescue of two ship personnel. **PAGE 3**

Around the CNMI

PSS' Sablan: There is no money to pay CUC

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Even if the Public School System owes the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.$1.8 million—which Education Commissioner Rita Sablanhas repeatedly denies—the school system will not be able to pay the debt until a new fiscal year begins on Wednesday.

CUC executive director Antonio Muña has said PSS owes $1.8 million in past debt and was expecting the payment by the end of September. On Wednesday, Muna revised the deadline to the beginning of October. The money, along with $1.6 million that Muña said is overdue from the central government, will help finance the $6 million Aggreko generators. A payment of $504,000 is due to Aggreko in two weeks.

Sablan has repeatedly said that, according to PSS' records, the school system is up to date with its payments.

"It's just unfair to remit payments we do not believe we owe," Sablan said.

There is no money available under the current budget to pay for the possible debt, and there won't be any additional money until a new fiscal year begins, she said.

As it is, Sablan said she has to determine where money can be saved.

"Many, many bills come to my office," she said. "I have to ask, 'how can I budget schools in a creative way?'"

In July, PSS reallocated $1.6 million from their personnel budget and "all others" budget to CUC after Finance Secretary Eloy Inos became involved in the situation.

Both Muña and Sablan say they are planning to meet and reconcile records.

Also, Muña said he has been in communication with Inos about the $1.6 million from the central government.

Substance abuse prevention training concludes

Nineteen representatives from local agencies completed a substance abuse prevention training workshop Friday.

The training, federally coordinated by the regional Western Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies, brought together people from government agencies, such as the Department of Public Safety, the Public School System and Community Guidance Center, and the non-government sector, such as the Pacific Wellness Center.

CNMI prevention fellow Maggie Untalan said the conference "builds workforce development and introduces the basic knowledge and foundation for prevention."

There were eight topics covered, including program planning, research prevention, evaluation and media ethics.

The weeklong training had two components: one for participants and one to train future program trainers, Untalan said. A trainer can facilitate future presentations and work with the community.

Participants took part in hands-on activities dealing with issues related to substance abuse. Some of the local issues examined included underage tobacco and alcohol abuse and betel nut abuse.

During a morning recap meeting on Friday, participants shared some of the things they had learned during the week. One participant learned that low income is not always a risk factor for substance abuse. Another participant said programs within the CNMI need to have more evaluation to determine if they are actually working.

Untalan said the training is just one of many that is used to further educate substance abuse prevention workers. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

USCG plans rescue of two ship personnel

Container ship is 750 miles north of Saipan

HAGATNA, Guam—From a 24-hour command center here in Apra Harbor, the U.S. Coast Guard is coordinating the medical evacuation of two male crew members from an ocean-going bulk carrier 750 nautical miles north of Saipan.

The two container ship crew members are in critical condition after an accident aboard the vessel on Sept. 26. A U.S. Air Force long-range aircraft from Kadena Air Force Base in Japan is en route to the container ship's position. The Air Force will deploy four pararescue jumpers—or "PJs"—to the deck of the container ship for medical assistance.

PJs are elite special operations command personnel with advanced medical training and often jump or parachute into hostile or "denied-entry areas" to recover downed military pilots. They are also deployed, however, on humanitarian missions where no other help is available for hours or hundreds of miles.

Coast Guard search and rescue controllers in Guam plan to direct the container ship to a position approximately 150 nautical miles from Saipan later Saturday. Two U.S. Navy search and rescue helicopter crews from Guam's Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron Two Five (HSC-25) will fly to the rendezvous point and then transfer the injured crew members to Naval Hospital Guam for urgent care. ***(USCG)***

'SAFETY FIRST' CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miguel Rangel, third from right, MPC Guam Safety Officer, together with Maeda Saipan engineers and MPC president Tom Nielsen, second from right, have a dinner meeting at Coconut Restaurant on Sept. 26, 2008. Rangel gave the MPC Saipan engineers a surprise visit at different project sites as part of the company's Safety Job Site Inspection. He also inspected the Basula Produkto Recycling Facility to see to it that safety measures are being enforced.

Angara, investment experts preview PERA law as APAFS investment conference nears

GUAM—The Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies held a press conference for its 8th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference last Sept. 24, 2008, at Board Room 5 of the Renaissance Makati City Hotel.

In attendance were Raul Diaz, president of Trust Officers Association of the Philippines; Vandermir Say, president of Chartered Financial Analyst; David John, president of ASC Trust Corp.; and Sen. Edgardo Angara.

ASC Philippines general manager Karen Ching hosted the press conference.

David John, APAFS board representative, gave an overview of the annual conference, saying, "We organize this conference every year to provide a regional resource for reviewing the latest trends, practices and issues in fiduciary management across the region, as well as give our delegates the chance to network with various colleagues from the industry."

Angara also delivered a preview of his talk by discussing the merits and benefits to the Filipino people of the PERA law, which he authored.

The floor was opened to questions, during which the panel shared insights on investments and the upcoming conference. The two-day conference on Oct. 9-10, 2008, at the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Makati City Hotel will address the present international trends in the industry as well as discuss fiduciary practices and implementations that are more suitable to the Asia-Pacific region. The conference also serves as an important venue for information and cultural exchange and provides networking opportunities to participants and lecturers alike.

The conference's keynote speaker is the legendary contrarian investor, Dr. Marc Faber, who is the author of *Tomorrow's Gold: Asia's Age of Discovery*, which enjoyed several weeks on Amazon's bestseller list and has been translated to five different languages. Other notable speakers are Angara, author of PERA Law and Philippine Pension Reform; Connie Mullis, vice president of ProfitSharing/401k Council of America; Geri Marullo, president & CEO of Consuelo Foundation; David J. John, president of ASC Philippines and ASC Trust Co. in Guam; and Frank W. Crawford, president of Crawford & Associates, PC, among others.

The 8th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference is sponsored by APAFS in partnership with CFA Philippines, Financial Executive Institute of the Philippines, Trust Officers Association of the Philippines, Graduate School (GS USDA) and the Philippine Stock Exchange.

For more information about APAFS and the 8th Annual Pacific Region Conference, access their website at www.apafs.org or contact their secretariat at 1-671-649-0883. ***(APAFS)***

Chamber to House: Don't override Fitial's veto

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is urging House lawmakers against overriding Gov. Benigno Fitial's veto earlier this month of legislation to privatize the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., saying the bill could lead to higher utility rates.

Fitial on Sept. 15 vetoed H.B. 16-77, saying in a letter to the House and Senate that key portions of it will "increase CUC's costs," an added expense that would be passed to consumers. However, the Senate later overrode the veto and the House will soon vote on whether to follow suit.

Now Chamber president James Arenovski, in a Sept. 26 letter to House Speaker Arnold Palacios, is pushing for lawmakers to uphold the governor's veto. While the Chamber supports privatizing CUC, he writes that sections of the bill threaten to force major utility rate increases.

"While the Chamber is generally in favor of the ultimate goal of the privatization of [CUC]… we are quite concerned that the bill will unquestionably lead to utility rates that include, in effect, a hidden, ongoing and significant tax on utility consumers paid to the general fund of the Commonwealth," Arenovski writes.

This hidden tax, the letter adds, stems from the $250 million price tag the bill requires prospective private sector buyers to pay in order to acquire CUC and a provision giving CUC the power to settle disputes with the Commonwealth Development Authority by issuing $45 million in preferred stock.

"Any purchase price attached to CUC's electric power generation operations will ultimately be passed on to utility consumers by the purchasing company through utility rates above and beyond what would otherwise be required to operate and maintain the utility system in a fair and prudent manner," Arenovski writes.

Any preferred stock offered to CDA, he adds, would come with guaranteed dividends, a cost to the purchasing company that "could be repaid only through an increase in utility rates to consumers."

H.B. 16-77 saw a host of major revisions when it was under review by lawmakers, according to a draft version of the bill that notes which sections were removed or changed. For example, lawmakers struck a major portion of the bill opening the door to full privatization of CUC during a 40-year period and lowered the original $500 million price for buying control of the utility service.

Despite the reduced price tag for CUC, the Chamber contends that many of the changes to the bill will prompt higher utility costs.

"To cause a further, artificial, increase in rates would not only harm residential utility consumers, but also likely prove an insurmountable challenge to the remaining businesses in the Commonwealth and deter new business investment," Arenovski writes.

ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION (RCGC)
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
P.O. Box 1547 ROTA, MP 96950

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, the RCGC's regular monthly meeting will be held as follows:

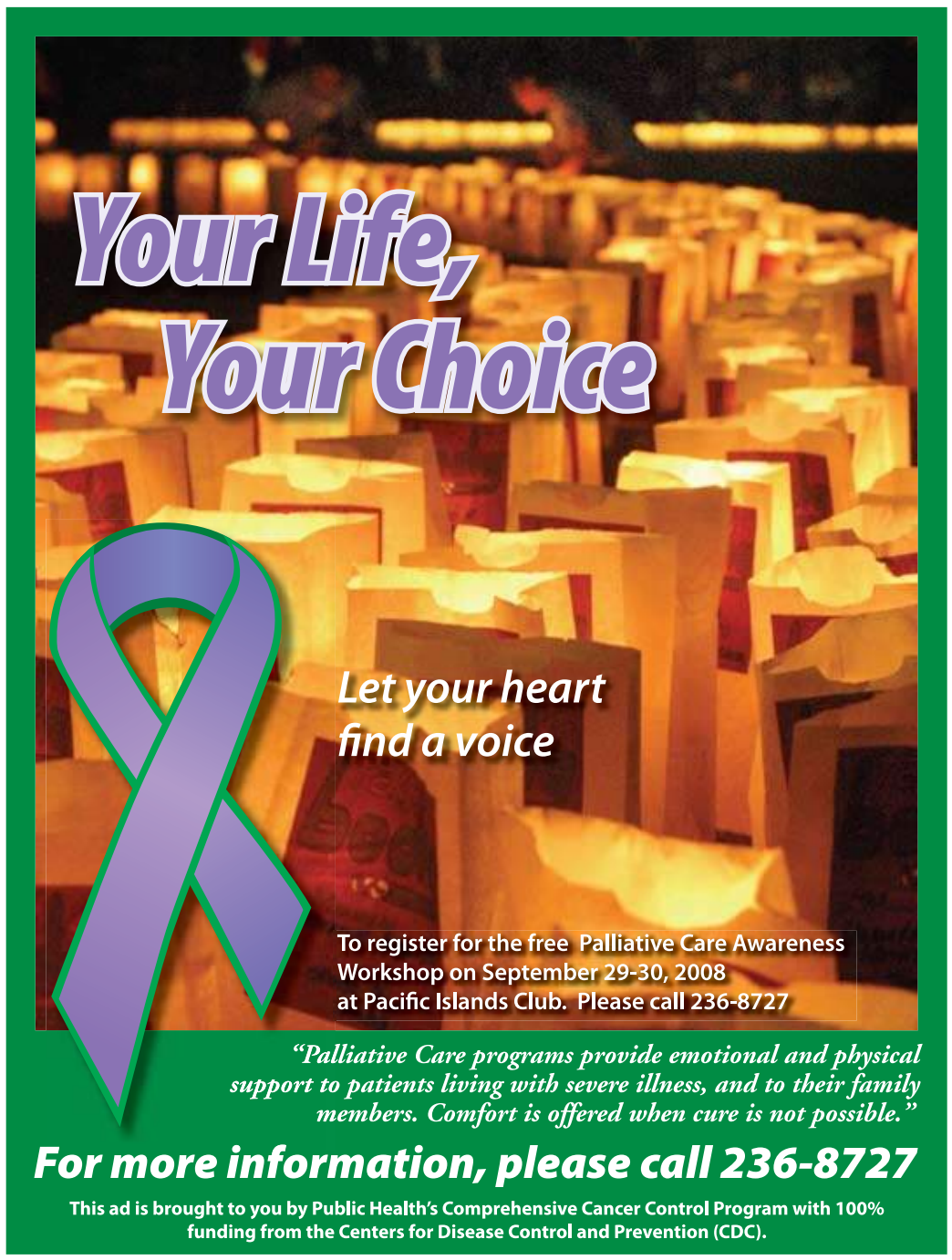
DATE : **Tuesday, September 30, 2008**
TIME : **3:00 P.M.**
LOCATION : **Antonio Camacho Atalig Memorial Annex Building, Tatachog, Rota**

AGENDA:

Call To Order
Roll Call
Adoption of Agenda
Adoption of Minutes
Chairman's Report
Old Business
Personnel Matters
New Business
Procurement
Miscellaneous
Adjournment

At anytime during meeting the commission may move to executive session.

/s/ Diego M. Songao — Chairman
September 24, 2008 — Date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Five trees planted as Chamorro reminder

Representatives for the islands of the CNMI and Guam gathered together yesterday to plant five trees at the Man'akmo Center as a reminder of the Chamorro heritage.

The event took place on the second day of the 3rd Annual Chamorro Conference. This is the first year Saipan has hosted the conference.

"It's a landmark to show people that the conference is a big step," said Howard Macaranas, director of Office on Aging and one of the organizers of the Chamorro Conference.

Macaranas said he wanted to do something different, and planting the trees will always be a reminder to people of the Chamorro history.

The trees were planted in the order representing the island's location.

Tony Palomo, a former three-term senator from Guam, planted that island's tree.

"From my point of view, it's to keep the relationships together and keep it for the future," he said.

The trees should remind people that even though Chamorros are spread across several islands, they are all one people.

"Indigenous people are Chamorros, and we've been artificially separated," he said. "We might never agree politically, but we can agree socially." ***(Kristi Eaton)***

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Tinian Mayor Jose P. San Nicolas plants a tree at the Manåmko Center/Office of Aging in Garapan in honor of the 3rd annual Chamorro Conference.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Saipan Mayor's Office representative Tony Benavente plants a tree in behalf of Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Organizers of the 3rd annual Chamorro Conference plant a tree for the island of Rota in behalf of Rota Mayor Joseph S. Inos.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council chairwoman Antonia M. Tudela and Humanities Council Executive Director Paz C. Younis help in planting a tree in behalf of Northern Islands Mayor Valentino Taisakan.

Fitial inks three proclamations

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has signed separate proclamations calling for the observance of humanities, soil and water conservation, and arbor month.

On Friday, the governor proclaimed October as CNMI Humanities Month, urging the local citizens to participate in the activities organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities.

The Humanities Council, a private, non-profit corporation, will announce the recipients of the 2008 Governor's Humanities Awards during the month. The annual awards recognize outstanding individual contributions in the humanities, as well as contributions made by donors, partners and former members of the Council's board of directors who have supported humanities programming in the CNMI over the past two decades.

On Thursday, Fitial proclaimed October as Commonwealth Arbor Month, called on CNMI residents to support the effort of planting and protecting trees.

October will also be Soil and Water Conservation Month in the Commonwealth. During this month, the CNMI Soil and Water Conservation Districts are expected to conduct programs promoting conservation measures, especially on farmlands, construction sites, secondary roads, and residential areas.

"Soil and Water Conservation Month reminds us of our individual responsibility to care for the soil and water resources upon which we depend. This month is in recognition of our efforts to protect these natural resources, which are vital to a good quality of life for all CNMI residents," says the proclamation.

"Every citizen of this Commonwealth is urged to become more aware of the need to protect and conserve our soil and water resources and to learn to use these resources in a sustainable manner," the proclamation adds. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Miura still facing charge of conspiracy to commit murder

From Page 1

The judge ruled against the murder element of the case because Miura had already been convicted in Japan for his wife's murder—a verdict that was ultimately overturned. California double-jeopardy rules prohibit someone being tried twice for the same crime.

But Van Sicklen found Miura had never been tried for conspiracy.

"Although the murder charge is barred by double jeopardy, the state may proceed on the charge of conspiracy to commit murder because there is no evidence that Miura was previously acquitted or convicted of the same offense in Japan," Van Sicklen said in his ruling.

Miura could face a sentence of 25 years to life in prison if convicted of conspiracy.

The ruling marks a partial victory for Miura because the dismissed murder count had contained a so-called special circumstance of lying in wait for financial gain which could have led to the death penalty.

Miura's attorney, Mark Geragos, said outside court that he was gratified by the judge's decision to dismiss a murder charge against Miura but disappointed that the conspiracy charge was allowed to stand. He said he has yet to decide whether to appeal to a higher court or wait to file new arguments in Los Angeles if Miura is extradited.

"The American expression is the judge cut the baby in half," Geragos told a throng of Japanese reporters outside the courtroom in a Los Angeles suburb.

The case has attracted extensive media attention in Japan and reporters grilled attorneys and a district attorney's spokeswoman about several possible permutations of the case.

Prosecutors had argued that double-jeopardy laws do not apply because California legislators in 2004 passed a law allowing someone tried in another country to stand trial here for the same crime.

Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor who is now a professor at Loyola University Law School, said prosecutors came out better in Van Sicklen's ruling.

"It doesn't make any difference," she said. "All things considered, Mr. Miura is in the same place as he was yesterday. He's still sitting in jail."

Geragos said his next step would be to focus on showing that Miura had already been acquitted of a conspiracy charge in Japan.

"It's my belief based on the evidence that's already in the record ... that he was acquitted on the conspiracy theory," Geragos.

Miura is alleged to have plotted to have his wife slain during a visit the couple made to Los Angeles in 1981. They were shot by someone in a car as they stood taking photos by a downtown parking lot. Prosecutors have said Miura wanted his wife dead so he could collect on her life insurance policies.

Miura was hit in the leg and his wife, Kazumi Miura, 28, was shot in the head. She died of her wounds a year later in Japan.

Miura underwent a convoluted legal odyssey in Japan that saw him convicted there of his wife's murder, only to have that verdict overturned in 1998 by the country's high courts.

The case resurfaced in February when Miura made a trip to Saipan, where he was arrested on an outstanding 1988 warrant.

Miura's extradition to California had appeared to be ready to go ahead but a judge in the Northern Mariana Islands Supreme Court on Sept. 15 ordered a stay, hours before a team of agents from the Los Angeles Police Department was due to pick him up.

A hearing on extradition is scheduled on Saipan on Monday.

Undersea mountain to be added to sanctuary

"This 585-square-nautical-mile addition will safeguard one of the largest seamounts in the U.S. waters, and will protect an extraordinary array of ocean creatures," Bush said to the applause of ocean regulators and activists.

Once it becomes part of the sanctuary, the seamount will be permanently off limits to offshore oil drilling and mining, and protected from dumping.

This would be the first significant boundary expansion of an existing national marine sanctuary under the Bush administration. Two years ago, Bush created the world's largest marine protected area in the waters around the Northwest Hawaiian Islands.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality has proposed protections for waters around U.S.-owned islands and atolls in the central and South Pacific, including Palmyra and Rose atolls, and the northern portion of the Mariana Trench.

Marine conservationists and scientists have been lobbying Bush to leave an "ocean legacy" that would protect maritime areas from future mining, oil and gas exploration, and unsustainable or ecologically destructive fishing practices.

Advocates contend that such a legacy might help temper criticism of the Bush administration for rolling back environmental protections for wildlife and habitat, opposing a cap on greenhouse gas emissions responsible for global warming and siding with industry on regulation of pollutants.

Bush signaled Friday that he has warmed to this idea. "I'm sprinting to the finish; I mean, four months, you can actually get a lot done," the president said. He added that he has asked four Cabinet secretaries "to work to find additional areas in the Pacific that could be eligible for federal protection."

Adding the Davidson Seamount to the Monterey Bay sanctuary will not be finalized until about Nov. 1, said William J. Douros, western regional director of the sanctuaries program.

The Davidson Seamount, about 70 miles off the coast, reaches 7,874 feet from the ocean floor. Its peak remains 4,120 feet beneath the ocean's surface.

Government scientists working with the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute who have explored its peaks and slopes have discovered sea life found nowhere else. The mountain, spreading over 25 miles of sea floor, hosts vast forests of deep, cold-water corals, sponges and an array of unusual deep-sea animals. Fish, sperm whales and seabirds feed in the highly productive surface waters above the seamount.

Most of the inhabitants of this cold, deep sea are slow growing, slow to reproduce and thus especially susceptible to the ravages of bottom-trawling, a fishing technique that drags weighted nets across the sea floor. ***(Los Angeles Times)***

New deadline set for Tim's pre-trial motions

From Page 1

omez's lawyer, Joey San Nicolas, and assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley.

According to the stipulation, the federal court on Sept. 17 granted the lieutenant governor's request to waive his right to a speedy trial. The judge set a new trial for March 23, 2009.

The stipulation said additional discovery will be provided to Villagomez and that this requires additional time to review to adequately prepare motions.

The original deadline was on Aug. 25, 2008. Munson extended the deadline to Sept. 8 after Villagomez's lawyer and O'Malley entered a stipulation to extend the deadline.

In the first request for extension, San Nicolas stated that the discovery received so far is voluminous and requires enough time to review to prepare pre-trial motions.

In the second motion to extend the deadline, San Nicolas underscored the need for another deadline considering that the U.S. government will provide additional discovery to them after the Sept. 8 deadline.

Munson granted the second request and set the deadline to no later than 3:30pm on Sept. 22, 2008.

Villagomez, James Santos, Joaquina Santos, and former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Anthony Guerrero were indicted with conspiring to bilk CUC out of thousands of dollars through business deals involving needless chemical purchases for CUC.

Villagomez and the Santos couple pleaded not guilty.

Guerrero signed a plea agreement and entered a guilty plea. It has been reported that he will testify for the prosecution when the case goes to trial.

Bell swims 73 miles to complete swim around Saipan

The Old Man in the Sea

By JAMES BELL
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The Old Man in the Sea is back on dry land, for the time being, getting ready to move to another island. The last few weeks have been busy, finishing up some odds and ends of the barrier reef, harbor and shoreline inside the lagoon. On Saturday, Sept. 20, I swam the reef up to the channel to Sugar Dock and completed the swim around Saipan at the place where I started on July 4th. The swim around Saipan was complete in that connecting my swims made a closed line around the island. The swimming I accomplished this week completed every foot of the barrier reef and shoreline inside the lagoon.

I ended my last report with a crossing of the reef in Laulau Bay. As often happens, getting back over the reef to the open ocean was more difficult. On my second try on Sept. 8, I found the surf was down enough to make it over the reef. This swim would complete the east side of the island, which has occupied my time since arriving at Bird Island on July 26. Halfway through this swim, I covered the last stretch of cliff-lined east coast with a two-mile swim between Dandan point and Naftan Point. It was one last encounter with the confused seas created by incoming waves colliding with waves reflecting from cliffs.

Naftan Point, the southeast corner of the island, was approached with various contingencies in mind since it lies on the north side of the Saipan-Tinian Channel. If the current was flowing from west to east in the channel, I would not be able to get past the point and would have to kill some time in the open sea to the east waiting for the tide and current to change. The available daylight at this time of the year would limit my wait to about two hours or I would risk experiencing nightfall in the ocean. There were a couple of places back up the coast which looked like possibilities for making it to shore with climbable slopes beyond. I would try for one of these at the end of two hours. If the current was flowing from east to west, there was the possibility that I might experience a countercurrent coming down the west side of the point. If this was the case, I would have to stay off shore in the channel and come to shore farther to the west.

There ended up being no current at all at the point, but I did experience a countercurrent developing farther up the west side of the point. The current was a little less than my maximum swim speed and I experienced something I used to experience as a younger man. Thirty years ago, when I was making slow gains against such a current, I would sometimes get a burst of energy and feel as if I could swim all-out and never stop. Now, I had been swimming for six hours, but suddenly the burst of energy was there. The adrenaline was pumping for 100 yards, then the current disappeared almost as fast as it had appeared, leaving me wondering if I still have the energy reserves I once had. Maybe so.

My target was Obyan Beach, which I reached by pulling myself in on rocks at the edge of a channel with an outgoing current. My total distance was 4.5 miles in 7 hours and 22 minutes. I had seen two reef sharks and a number of turtles on this swim and some coral west of Naftan Point that was of such a deep purple that it almost seemed to glow. The reef is a hauntingly beautiful place.

The 7.5-mile walk home in the dark on roads, most of which have no provision for pedestrians, was also an adventure.

I had chosen to end my next segment at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Course, the place where I came ashore after swimming the Tinian Channel on June 9th. I proceeded westward along the north edge of the channel seeing some coastline I had not seen on my first swim of the Saipan-Tinian Channel in 1981 or on my most recent crossing. I found a current flowing from east to west that did not hug the shoreline but appeared only where points extended into the channel. I was picking up the current again as I swam along the shoreline adjacent to the golf course, but things looked different approaching from the east. There was another point ahead and I figured the place where I came ashore in June must be just beyond this point. As the current picked up in speed near the point, things began to look familiar and I realized I was about to leave the Saipan-Tinian Channel behind. The point was Agingan Point, the southwest corner of the island. Swimming with the current, I fairly flew by the point and burst into the Philippine Sea for the first time since July.

Turning north, I left the current and started up the west side of the point. Within a few hundred yards, the barrier reef formed and arced out to sea in a graceful curve that would carry it the length of the lee side of the island, with a few breaks, finally merging with the shore again at Wing Beach some fourteen miles away. The surf was up to some extent and there was no good place to cross the reef until the break in the reef at the channel leading to Sugar Dock. With the current running in the Tinian Channel and the surf up, I really had no choice but to head for Sugar Dock. This would mean finishing my swim a week early without fanfare instead of meeting friends there.

RIK/JANEL VILLEGAS
Jim Bell poses at the top of Mount Tapochau to see the island he swam around. This view shows Lau Lau Bay in the background.

I think when the current in the Tinian-Saipan Channel is running at full strength from east to west there are probably large eddies of water on each side of the channel as it empties into the Philippine Sea. As I proceeded to the north, apparently the north-side eddy impinged on the reef, giving a current heading south. No burst of energy was going to carry me two miles up the reef in a current that was increasing by the minute so my only option was to cross the reef.

Swimming across a reef is a different experience than snorkeling. Swim fins are powerful even in shallow water, but bare feet are not much force in any depth. Approaching the reef, you get on the backside of a wave and swim hard to stay just behind the peak of the wave. As the wave plunges, the back side of the wave is propelled forward and you ride it over the reef. For a few seconds the water is deep enough to swim free style, then as the wave spreads over the reef, a few seconds of breast stroke and finally you start pulling yourself forward with quickly, but carefully selected handholds in holes and, if necessary, coral. Practically every hole is home to someone, but the residents you particularly want to avoid are the spiny sea urchins. As the water loses its momentum, you look for secure handholds and hang on. The next wave, usually following in about 9 to 11 seconds, is slowing and rising into an almost vertical front. As it does so, the trough in front of it deepens and the water on the reef cascades back into this trough. You do not want to be pulled backwards into the trough. As the wave plunges, you will be slammed onto the reef and then rolled in the advancing surge. The coral that could be used gingerly for handholds will spoil your whole day if you are rolled or dragged over it.

I stayed out of the trough, threaded my way through the branching coral at the lagoon edge of the reef front and finally made it to the deeper water of the lagoon. Landfall was made at the Pacific Islands Club Resort. I had swum 4.6 miles in 4 hours and 54 minutes. I was in the home stretch now; a three-mile walk up the beach and I was home with the sun still shining.

Saturday, Sept. 20, marked the day of completion. I left my walking shoes at Sugar Dock and walked barefooted down the two miles of beach to my starting point. Halfway there, I slipped on mossy concrete slabs piled across the beach and got a nasty cut on my right arm. It was still bleeding moderately when I started my swim. I figured that this might raise the rather modest shark count for my swim, but I encountered only one reef shark and he swam quickly away.

Going out over the reef with plunging surf was a different process than the week before. Now, I was going against the surging waves and had to dig in and wait for the right timing. I found a hole in the reef close to the leading edge and deep enough to duck down in when the waves surged over me. After 18 minutes, there was a brief period of disorganization in the waves, I made my break for it and got over the reef before the next wave plunged.

I had told friends that I would finish my swim at Sugar Dock at noon. I allowed plenty of time in case I ran into the opposing current again and had to come back in for a swim up the beach in the lagoon. It was a beautiful swim, with no current at all. For the first time in my swim around the island, I was worried that things were going too well. I arrived at the channel leading to Sugar Dock at 11:00 and had to do some reef sightseeing to use up time. I arrived at the dock at 11:56.

Waiting for me at the beach were friends who had been there for the start of the swim on July 4th: Perry Conner, Eun Hee Chu, Rik and Janel Villegas and their children, Lakell, Alicia and Jason.

A break for statistics (these are wet, not dry statistics): Total Miles Swum: 73. Total Time: 87 hours 24 minutes. Total Reef Miles: 13.6. Total Shoreline Miles: 46.3. Total Miles Walked: 91.5. Sea Creatures: 15 reef sharks; 12 turtles; 5 sting rays; 5 crown of thorns starfish. Note: The Total Miles exceeds the total of Reef Miles and Shoreline Miles because it includes miles swum in the lagoon that did not count as reef or shore miles.

My future plans include a change of residence to Tinian with a swim to Tinian on Oct. 4. After swimming the channel, I will swim the shoreline of Tinian in segments as I did with Saipan. That completed, I will fly, not swim (63 miles), to Rota and swim the shoreline there. During my stay on Tinian, I may try a swim to Goat Island (5 miles), which would require spending a night there before returning the next day.

I will probably send out a special report on my channel swim and then reports on my progress in swimming the shoreline of Tinian.

To be continued.

United States
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Council on Developmental Disabilities
Developmental Disabilities Basic State Grant Program
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NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the Council Members of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, through its Interim Chairman, is hereby giving a notice that a Special Meeting is to take place on Friday, October 3, 2008 at 9:00 AM in the conference room of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Welcoming Remarks
II. Roll Call
III. Establishment of Quorum
IV. Executive Session
V. Open Session
VI. Next Meeting
VII. Closure

In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 3 days in advance at 664-7000. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Derek Duenas, Interim Chairperson

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
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PUBLIC NOTICE
SEPTEMBER 27, 2008

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION DIVISION (DCD) OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY THRU ITS CHAIRWOMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE DCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A REGULAR MEETING ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2008 AT 10:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CDA CONFERENCE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, WAKIN'S BUILDING, CHALAN PALE ARNOLD ROAD, SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Roll Call
II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES
IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS
V. REPORTS
1. Financial Report – DCD
2. Loan Reports
a. Approved Loans & Bank Guarantees
b. Bank Guarantees Status' Report
c. Loan Status/Receivables Report
d. DCD Performing Loan Summary/Delinquency & Litigation
VI. OLD BUSINESS
VII. NEW BUSINESS
1. New Loan Applications/Borrower's Requests
VIII. OTHER MATTERS
IX. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman, DCD Board of Directors

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 272

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Another Iraq benchmark

While Washington was seized with congressional negotiations over the Wall Street bailout, Iraq's parliament on Wednesday took another major step toward political stabilization. By a unanimous vote, the national legislature approved a plan for local elections in 14 of 18 provinces by early next year—clearing the way for a new, more representative and more secular wave of politicians to take office. The legislation eliminates the party slate system that allowed religious authorities to dominate Iraq's previous elections, and it provides for women to hold 25 percent of seats. Most important, it will allow Sunni leaders who boycotted the 2005 provincial elections—and who have since allied themselves with U.S. forces against al-Qaida in Iraq—to compete for political power in the provinces that were once the heartland of the insurgency.

As always in Iraq's halting journey toward a new order, the reform was not complete. Elections were put off in the province surrounding the volatile city of Kirkuk, where Kurds, Sunni Arabs and other groups compete for power, and in three Kurd-run provinces. Staging fair and peaceful elections will be another major challenge: In the south of Iraq, competition among Shiite parties, including those of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Mahdi Army leader Muqtada al-Sadr, could easily spill over into violence. The importance of securing the elections is one good reason for President Bush's decision to withdraw only 8,000 of the 146,000 remaining U.S. troops in Iraq between now and February. Still, the precipitous drop in violence in Iraq during the past year offers strong reason for hope that a good election can be held—and that the new Sunni and Shiite leaders who emerge will be well positioned to jump-start reconstruction in the provinces and negotiate with each other.

For some time, U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker has been citing provincial elections as the most important of Iraq's "political benchmarks." This week's breakthrough follows others in recent months, including the reform of a law that purged former members of Saddam Hussein's Baath party from government posts. More steps are needed—most important, agreement on a law distributing Iraqi oil revenue among provinces and allowing for new investment. But it's now clear that the political progress that the Bush administration hoped would follow the surge of U.S. forces in Iraq has finally begun. How can the next president preserve that momentum? Democrat Barack Obama continues to argue that only the systematic withdrawal of U.S. combat units will force Iraqi leaders to compromise. Yet the empirical evidence of the past year suggests the opposite: that only the greater security produced and guaranteed by American troops allows a political environment in which legislative deals and free elections are feasible.

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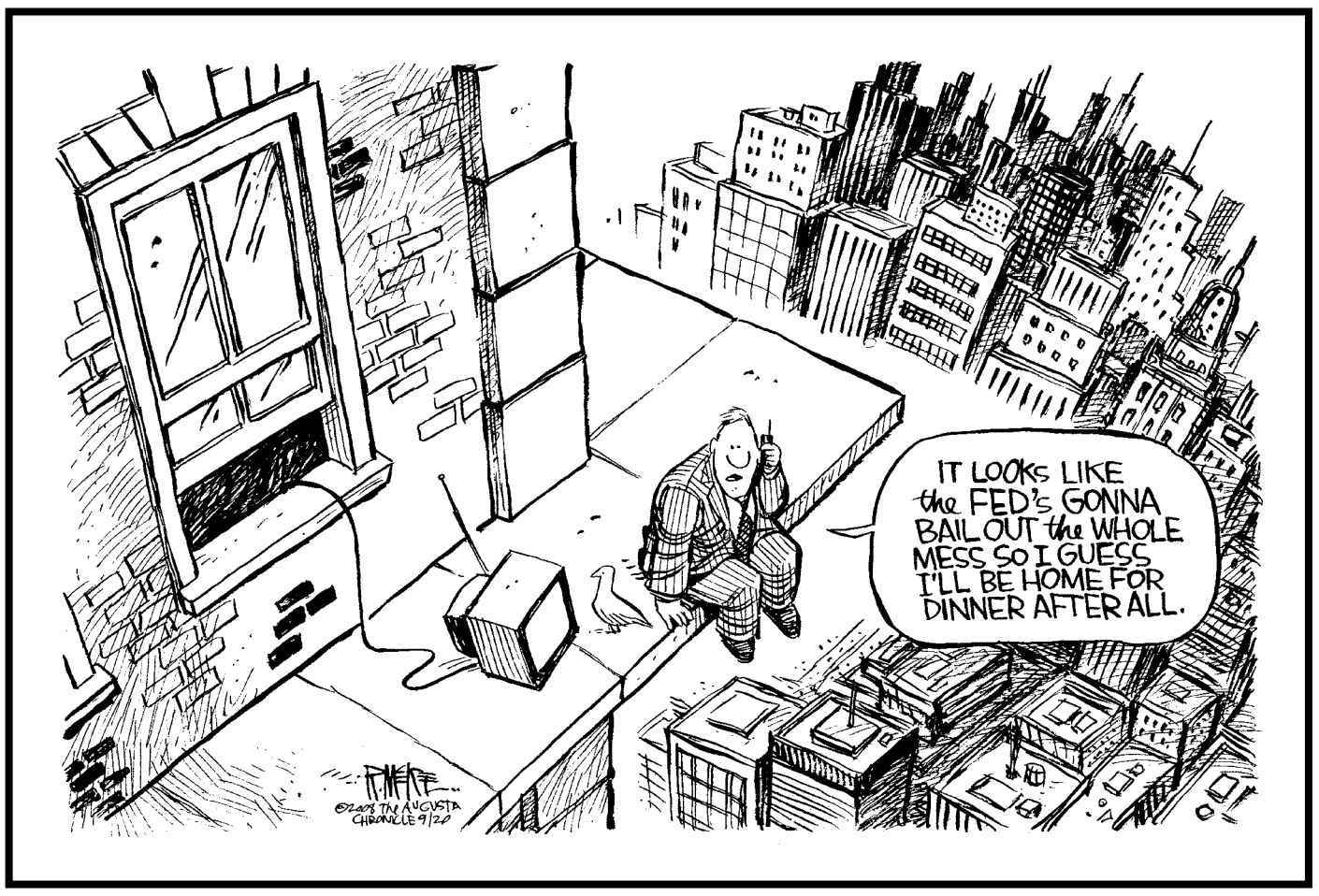
IT LOOKS LIKE the FED'S GONNA BAIL OUT the WHOLE MESS SO I GUESS I'LL BE HOME FOR DINNER AFTER ALL.
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Too good to be true? It usually is.

By MONICA HESSE
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

This election has been hard on all of our inboxes.

Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin's (cut and pasted) head on a patriotically bikini'd bod? Sen. Barack Obama cluelessly chatting on a (Photoshopped) upside-down phone? Sen. John McCain identifying himself—according to a totally mangled forward—as a "war criminal"?

Gotta be fakes, all of them. Right?

Because why would a grown man hold a phone upside do—well, then again, it wouldn't be the first time a politician was a doofus maximus. So maybe, just to be on the safe side. ...

Which is why no inbox has had it harder in these last frenzied weeks than the one belonging to David and Barbara Mikkelson, the founders and sole researchers at urban legend mega-site Snopes.com.

The couple debunked each of the myths above, along with dozens more allegations ranging from the wacko (a claim that the Bible identifies Obama as the antichrist) to the wonko (a widely circulated comparison of the two candidates' tax plans).

Snopes receives 6.3 million site visits a month, according to media measurement company Quantcast, and about 600 e-mailed research requests a day from desperate voters who don't know What. To. Believe.

"Usually it's around 400," says Barbara, 49. "But, election season." She sighs.

"A lot of people don't realize," David, 48, says wearily, "that our site is just two people."

Working out of their living room.

And so the confused masses write. And writeandwriteandwrite. Not always about politics, though in recent weeks politics has dominated the site. Forget about Cokelore, forget about Glurge—two classic Snopes categories. Currently Palin, Obama, Sen. Joe Biden and McCain, in that order, top the "Hottest 25 Legends," a compilation updated daily of the terms generating the most reader e-mails and user searches.

This confused and earnest quest for the truth is why the Mikkelsons refuse to classify any request as stupid. It's not about stupidity. It's about desperation. Studies have shown that people will believe anything that's repeated multiple times, which, in these days of mass e-mails, constitutes just about everything. It makes getting to the bottom of something a battle between our real desire for truth and the limits of our neurological makeup.

Occasionally, the most bizarro queries end up being true. Sort of. Yes, Barack Obama DID say that he'd visited 57 states during his campaign. But according to the video footage David and Barbara provide, it appears to be a flub born of exhaustion: He had actually visited 47. The Mikkelsons found no evidence, FYI, that Obama was secretly referring to the 57 member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Each of their sources is cited, each of their entries is marked with a color-coded circle standing for true or false (and occasionally, undetermined).

Ah, Snopes. What a stalwart it has become, a sort of go-to intellectual Drano clearing out the apocryphal political sewage that clogs our brains more and more each day.

It's morphed into its own verb—Snopesed, Snopesing, Snopesifying—part of an information-overloaded election where stuff needs to be fact-checked, where believing everyone is lying seems more like smarts than paranoia. "I was Snopesing about last night," a user on a parenting message board writes in wonder, "and I discovered that the bulk of (Cindy McCain's) good deeds are more than just right-wing wonkery."

It's a one-sentence rebuttal to even the bat-craziest of e-mail forwards: Dude, Snopesify that junk.

Such oracle-like power was not the original intent of David and Barbara, who met cute in 1994 on a user group dedicated to discussing urban legends. Barbara moved from Ottawa to be with David, setting up a rudimentary Snopes in their Los Angeles area home. Their site takes its name from a particularly pernicious family peopling a William Faulkner trilogy—and papering academia with hundreds of doctoral dissertations.

A few years ago, David left his job as a computer programmer to join his wife in full-time myth-busting (income is from ad space purchased on the site), and recently they hired an assistant whose sole job is reading through the massive piles of nutty that seem to signify everything from mudslinging partisanship to the death of satire.

Just the other day, they received a note from someone wanting to know the veracity of a newscast entitled "2008 Election Results Leaked," in which a voter complains, "If you can't trust the shadowy overlords that run your election, who can you trust?"

The video was from the Onion, a satirical newspaper whose current headlines include "No One on SWAT Team Wants to Wait in Ventilation Duct With Howard."

The Mikkelsons, who consider themselves apolitical—Barbara's still Canadian—opted not to debunk that particular story. They try to reserve precious Snopesifying man-hours for the stories they think have the most legs, the highest likelihood of going viral.

But they couldn't overlook another query, not after it was e-mailed by dozens of concerned readers. Branded as a series of Palin quotes, the document contained such ramblers as, "God made dinosaurs ... so that when they died and became petroleum products we, in his perfect image, could use them in our snow machines, pickup trucks and fishing boats."

This text, as you, dear elite intellectual reader, may have suspected, is meant to be a joke. The Mikkelsons traced it to a blog labeling it as satire, not once but three separate times.

And yet, the e-mails came: "Does Sarah Palin really believe that dinosaurs are lizards of the Devil?"

"After you've received a few hundred e-mails like these," says David, "you figure that even if it looks obvious, it's not obvious to everyone. ... There's never anything so ridiculous that at least some people won't believe it."

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

They called, I answered. It got to me.

By KAYT SUKEL
Special to The Washington Post

Sukel is a freelance writer.

BEDESBACH, Germany—When my husband deployed to Iraq for the second time in April, he left me responsible for the following things: our 3-year-old son, our finances and his company-level family readiness group, or FRG.

The last is the Army's reinvention of the old-school military family support group. The informal, potluck-supper and sympathy-casserole model that had prevailed during past conflicts wasn't going to cut it for the long, frequent deployments of Operation Iraqi Freedom. So the Army created the FRG, an official, solidly regulated organization run by family volunteers, with the dual goal of supporting both families and the military mission.

During my husband's first sojourn in the Iraqi desert in 2003, I'd thought the organization was poorly managed. So when Nick got his first command a little more than two years ago, I was happy to take the group's helm, as the commander's wife traditionally does. I knew I could do better.

But that was before the telephone calls started.

"You got the president of the United States on the news saying that deployments are now only going to be a year. Why doesn't that apply to us?"

It seemed simple enough. The FRG leader training class at our small post in Germany clearly laid out my mission. I was to be a referral and information service, to help spouses navigate the Army bureaucracy and inform them of available services. If someone had a complaint about her husband's supervisor making him work long hours, I would gently remind her that her husband would need to take up the chain of command. I was to make it plain that there were appropriate ways to address issues. I wasn't a direct conduit to the top just because I happened to share a bed with the guy in charge.

I was there to help organize bake sales and plan kid-friendly trips to the local zoo and barbecues to keep morale up. I was there to recruit and direct volunteers. And I was there to activate our phone tree, so that critical information from the commander about events, deployments or, in the worst case, a soldier's injury or death, was respectfully communicated to each spouse.

But I was *not* to get overly involved.

"Think of yourself as the policeman directing traffic at an intersection," the instructor told us. "That policeman doesn't pull or push cars across the crossroads. He doesn't allow the cars to get too close. He merely directs, allowing those cars to move ahead on their own steam." She did not, however, address how to handle situations when the cars ran out of steam, beyond telling us, "Know that it's OK to say, 'This is not an FRG issue' and end it there."

"He didn't come home last night. My friend said she saw him out with another woman at the clubs."

I'd heard of FRG leaders stressed to the point of breaking. Rumors abounded about the wife of one former commander who cried before and after every monthly FRG meeting, overwhelmed by all that the families expected of her.

That would not be me. After years in the corporate world as an information-technology consultant, I knew how to delegate and how to distance myself to get the job done. If I stuck to the rules, there was no way I'd get sucked into the drama.

But I got sucked into the drama.

"My ex-husband won't let my daughter come live with us. Not that he wants to take care of her, he just wants to punish me. I don't know how I'm supposed to get by for 15 months without my husband or my child."

During my husband's tenure as commander from 2006 to 2007, we weathered rumors of a new deployment, a chlamydia outbreak among our unit's soldiers and some of their wives, spousal abuse, drugs, and more family financial issues than I could ever have imagined.

There were calls about why my husband was making soldiers work late, about self-esteem issues, about shameless catfights and adultery. Once a spouse called to request that my husband instruct hers to impregnate her—if he fell in the line of duty, a child would be her only consolation. There were too many situations for which the FRG leaders handbook offered no solution except the forbidding "This is not an FRG issue," a statement that only left spouses feeling as though the Army, the same Army that was taking their husbands away for years at a time, didn't care about their problems—or them.

I started doing the only thing I could: I took time to listen. After a few months, I was stressed out. I took things personally. And the question always remained: Was it doing any good?

"He won't mind me no matter what I say. He only listens to his daddy. I'm at the end of my rope. Could you maybe watch him for a while?"

When my husband took a second command at a new U.S. post here, I knew I had fared no better than my predecessors. I didn't think I had it in me to do it again. But Nick asked me to anyway. "With you, I'll know things are taken care of back here," he said. "It would make things easier on me." I couldn't refuse.

Now, a few months into a 15-month deployment to Iraq already raw with the loss of some soldiers to battle, the phone seems to ring constantly. They tell me they heard, they lost, they hope, they want, they fear, they don't understand, they wish and they need. Always, they need. They know that I probably won't be able to help—that I can only refer them to Army services stretched thin, tell them to ignore any rumor that hasn't been officially confirmed by the unit, or maybe offer a little encouragement. But still they call. Sometimes dozens a day.

"I haven't heard from him in over two weeks. And I wouldn't ask, but is there some way to get a message to him? Our last call didn't go so well."

I don't blame them for coming to me. Isn't it only natural for people to push back when they feel powerless? And it feels just as natural for me to take the time to listen, even if all I'm doing is letting them know that they—as much as their soldiers—matter.

But how long can I keep this up? I, too, worry about my child, my work running a writing business and, not least, my husband at war.

"Once he got to Iraq, he changed all the bank accounts. Now he's only sending me a couple hundred dollars a month. How am I supposed to live on that?"

My husband will change out of this command next year, and I will turn over the FRG reins when he does. My replacement has already asked what she can do to prepare. I find myself stymied by the question.

I often wonder what an FRG leader could do to really empower these spouses, really make a difference as they try to find their way in their husbands' absence. Had I remained aloof, an untouchable traffic cop who called only to remind people about bowling night or to solicit baked-goods donations, would it have been better for everyone? I don't know. It seems that I'm just not traffic-cop material. And with some predicting that the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan may continue for another 10 years or more, I have to wonder, when faced with the diverse and complex needs of military families, whether anyone really could be.

How to spend that $700 billion

By SEBASTIAN MALLABY
Special to The Washington Post

WASHINGTON—Even if congressional leaders can close a deal on the bank rescue, the real debate is just beginning. The key questions about the plan are not the ones that Congress debated: how much it would cost and whether it would impose symbolic pay caps for bosses whose wealth has already been hammered. Rather, the key question lies in the execution of the bailout.

Start with the sobering fact that even a $700 billion rescue fund would be small relative to financial markets. Private lenders (not counting Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) own $6.5 trillion of mortgage-related loans plus $2.5 trillion in consumer loans and yet more trillions in corporate loans. By themselves, federally insured deposit-taking banks hold loans totaling $14 trillion.

Given these astronomical numbers, the government's plan will fare best if markets respond favorably to it. The bailout is often seen as a commando operation, in which you take out the bad-loan enemy and imprison him in a government vault. But it is also a hearts-and-minds operation, in which you persuade wary financiers whose territory you have invaded to trust you and work with you.

The key question is whether Treasury purchases of bad loans will encourage hedge funds and other investors to dive in themselves. If the government starts a buying trend, its plan will work brilliantly. If it triggers a selling reaction, those trillions of dollars in private hands could swamp its efforts.

How can the Treasury encourage private players to back up its purchases? The short answer is: Buy cheaply. If the government pays, say, 30 percent of what the loans were originally worth, any hedge fund that thinks they are really worth 40 percent will dive into the market. If the government pays 50 percent of what the loans were originally worth, that same hedge fund will stay on the sidelines—or may even figure out a way of betting against the government.

In their congressional testimony this week, Hank Paulson and Ben Bernanke have sent mixed signals on this crucial issue. They say they want to create a liquid market for bad loans—which means they want to encourage private buying. Yet they also say they don't want banks to have to unload assets at "fire-sale" prices, which suggests they may want to pay some higher price—which would discourage private buying.

Some Wall Streeters believe that Paulson and Bernanke can have it both ways. If the government buys large quantities of debt at 50 cents on the dollar, the turnover in that debt could make it more attractive to buyers: Investors like to own stuff that's actively traded and can be unloaded. So perhaps the government could pay 50 cents on the dollar and still persuade the hedge funds to pile in. What was worth 40 cents before the rescue operation could soon be worth 50 cents-plus because it is being traded.

Unfortunately, this is probably too optimistic. If the government buys a mountain of loans and then goes home, it will not have created the ongoing turnover that investors find attractive. If it buys loans in monthly installments, it will create some continuing action, but the purchases may be too small to persuade hedge funds that they can unload their paper if they need to. Besides, the hedge funds would have to believe that next month's government purchases would be targeted at the particular type of loans they own. Faced with these uncertainties, the funds would probably hold back unless the loans are a real bargain.

Paulson and Bernanke constitute a dream team—a top market practitioner and a top economist. But they shrink from buying loans cheaply because doing so would force banks that currently value loans at high prices to recognize big losses, leaving them with too little capital. Buying loans cheaply would solve the liquidity problem in the loan market, but it would also reveal banks' capital shortage.

In the face of this dilemma, the dream team's instinct seems to be to split the difference—pick a price that's low but not too low, so that you get some liquidity without vaporizing bank capital. But there is a better way: Tackle the capital shortage directly. Paulson has already urged banks to cut their dividends to preserve capital. When his key lieutenant, Robert Steel, left Treasury to run a troubled bank, its dividend was cut immediately. Now, Paulson needs to move more forcefully. He should use every power to block dividend payments, and he should overcome his squeamishness about using part of the bailout fund to bolster banks' capital.

Paulson may not like the idea of the government owning chunks of the financial system. But after the nationalization of Fannie, Freddie and AIG, it's too late to worry about that. Besides, if the U.S. government refuses to recapitalize the banking system, foreign governments may eventually do so. Sovereign wealth funds have already bought $35 billion worth of stakes in U.S. financial institutions.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds around 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°

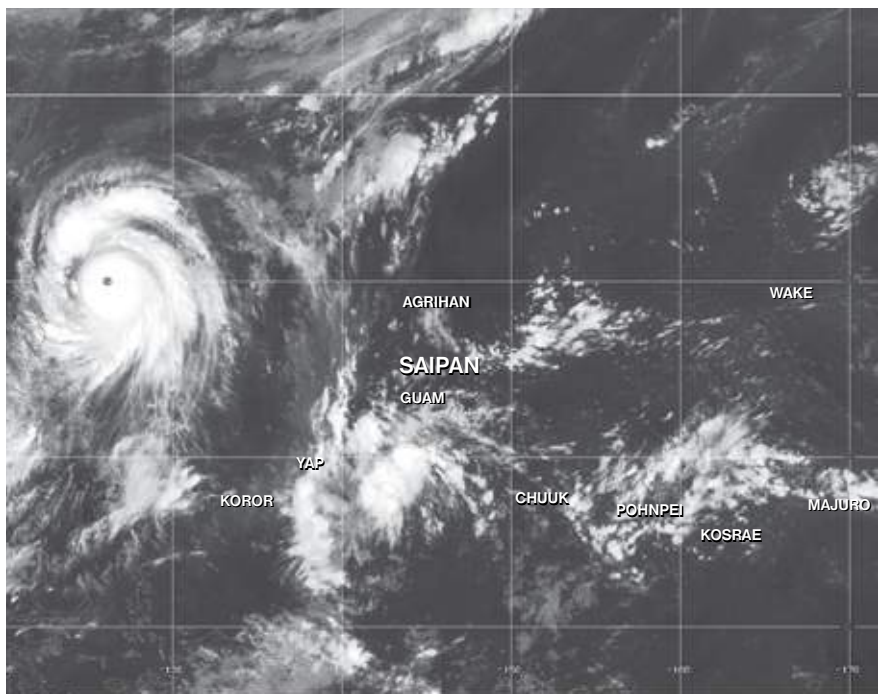
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼76
Palau	Mostly CLoudy	▲87	▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼71
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88	▼76
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲82	▼71

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲61	▼56
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲70	▼46
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲90	▼77
Honolulu	Showers	▲85	▼76
London	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼50
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲82	▼62
Manila	Thundershowers	▲86	▼77
Melbourne	Showers	▲65	▼44
Miami	Cloudy	▲88	▼76
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲75	▼62
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲71	▼60
Paris	Sunny	▲65	▼50
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲72	▼61
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼53
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼47
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲74	▼56
Seoul	Sunny	▲72	▼50
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲73	▼61
Washington, DC	Showers	▲76	▼61

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Typhoon Jangmi (19W) is located southeast of Taiwan near 20N126E.Moving northwest at 13 mph with maximum sustained winds of 155 mph. Showers and thunderstorms associated with Jangmi are occurring west of 133E between 15N and 24N. A weak circulation centered east of Yap at 9N143E is associated with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms found between 6N and 13N from 137E to 146E and between 2N and 6N from 137E to 140E. Scattered trade-wind showers are occurring within 150 miles of a line from 5N155E to 10N163E to 7N175E. This area includes Pohnpei, Kwajalein and Majuro.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:53AM Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
6:29AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
1:02PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
7:10PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:06AM	6:09 PM
Monday	6:07AM	6:08 PM
Tuesday	6:07AM	6:07 PM
Wednesday	6:07AM	6:06 PM
Thursday	6:07AM	6:06 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:52AM	5:16PM
Monday	5:43AM	5:53PM
Tuesday	6:33AM	6:31PM
Wednesday	7:24AM	7:10PM
Thursday	8:16AM	7:51PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7

Manila-Guam

CO 892	11:45am	8:25pm+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

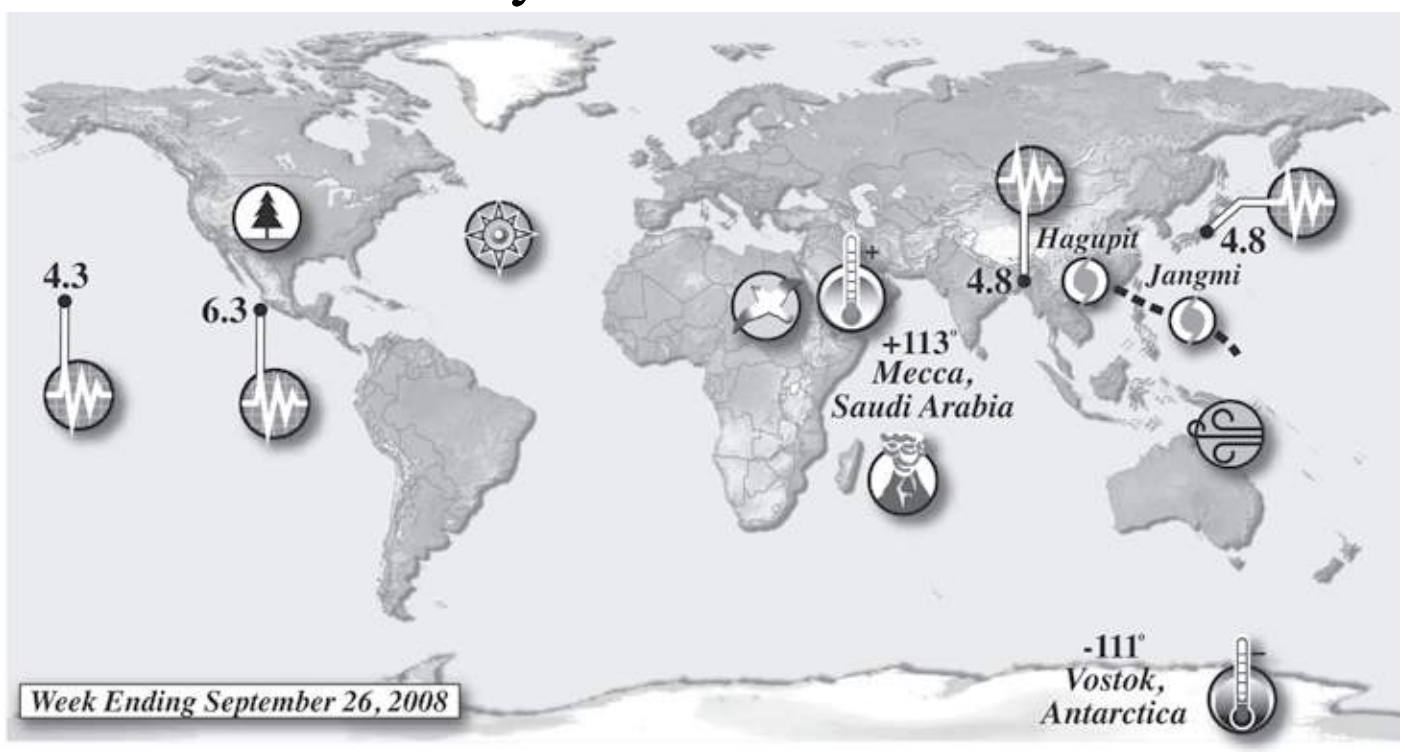
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Earthweek: A Diary of the Planet

By STEVE NEWMAN



A Less-Blustery Sun

The stream of charged particles that rushes outward from the sun has weakened to its lowest level in at least 50 years, threatening to allow dangerous cosmic rays from deep space to reach the inner solar system. Measurements of the solar wind by the Ulysses spacecraft show the wind's pressure has dropped 20 percent since the mid-1990s, and the temperature of the electrons within the flow has declined by 13 percent. The solar wind normally keeps the cosmic radiation at bay. Earth's magnetic field provides an inner shield to protect life on the planet from the super high-energy electrons and protons arriving from countless light-years away. But any astronauts traveling to the moon or beyond, outside Earth's shield, would be at an increased risk of exposure due to the weaker solar wind.

Pollution Equator

An air pollution barrier, or "chemical equator," that keeps the polluted air of the northern hemisphere from contaminating the less-industrialized hemisphere to the south has been found by British scientists. Meteorologists have long known about a boundary of convective storms in equatorial regions that moves north and south with the seasons. It is the zone where trade winds from the northern and southern hemispheres converge. The Intertropical Convergence Zone was once thought to be what kept northern air pollution from infiltrating the cleaner environs south of the equator. But writing in the *Journal of Geophysical Research—Atmospheres*, a team from the University of York says they found a separate barrier about 30 miles wide in the cloud-free western Pacific, where carbon monoxide levels were four times higher on the northern side.

Winged Menace

Sudan's troubled Darfur region has received another blow to its stability—this time from an invasion of starlings, known locally as zarzur. The Sudanese daily *Al-ray Alaa'm* reports that large flocks of the winged pests have descended upon South Darfur State, destroying crops and threatening to bring even more acute food shortages and higher prices. A spokesman for the Sudanese Revolutionary Front said government neglect had allowed the bird invasion, but stated that his forces would not interfere with any airplanes dispatched to combat the birds with aerial spraying.

Tropical Cyclones

China's Guangdong province and nearby territories were lashed by high winds and storm-surge tides as Typhoon Hagupit made landfall near the city of Maoming. Winds in excess of 125 mph were recorded near the storm's center, and moderate wind damage was reported in Macao and Hong Kong as Hagupit passed nearby. At least one person was killed in China and another six died in the northern Philippines from flooding associated with the typhoon.

Typhoon Jangmi formed just north of Micronesia, and was predicted to take a path similar to that of Hagupit during the following week.

Earthquake

A 6.3 magnitude temblor off Mexico's Pacific coast triggered a brief local tsunami alert, but no significant changes in sea level or damage from the shaking was reported.

■ Earth movements were also felt in Bangladesh, metropolitan Tokyo and the Big Island of Hawaii.

Indian Ocean Eruption

A fresh eruption of a volcano on the Indian Ocean island of Reunion created a small lake of lava and triggered a release of sulfur dioxide gas in an uninhabited area. Lava began spewing from a new crack in Piton de la Fournaise about midway up the slope of the crater, according to authorities. The volcano is one of the world's most active and is a popular tourist attraction on the French overseas territory. The lava flow is the first since the mountain erupted violently in April 2007, which was dubbed the "eruption of the century." The volcano's summit collapsed at that time, and lava sometimes spewed up to 650 feet into the air. Piton de la Fournaise is located in a remote area of Reunion and usually does not threaten the island's population.

Tree Talk

Researchers have found that at least one type of tree can signal nearby plants of impending drought or other environmental stress that could affect plant well-being. Scientists at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) say they observed walnut trees releasing large amounts of an aspirin compound to reduce damage from adverse conditions, and to possibly warn nearby plants. "These findings show tangible proof that plant-to-plant communication occurs on the ecosystem level," said NCAR scientist and study co-author Alex Guenther. Writing in *Biogeosciences*, the team said the finding could lead to farmers being able to recognize early warning signs from crops that they are about to fail.

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OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Maine anchor gets hate mail for Palin resemblance

BANGOR, Maine (AP)—A Maine TV news anchor who bears a resemblance to the Republican vice presidential nominee says she's been getting "hate mail and nasty phone calls" from viewers who think she's trying to copy Sarah Palin's signature style. Cindy Michaels from WVII-TV has long brown hair that she sometimes wears up in a style similar to Palin's, and she also wears glasses on occasion. Michaels says viewers recently began accusing her of trying to copy Palin's style or, worse, somehow trying to subliminally sway votes. While smarting over accusations of bias, Michaels says she's generally flattered by the comparisons to Palin. Michaels describes her as a "beautiful woman."

Pastor gets 17 months for stealing relief funds

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—A former pastor has been sentenced to 17 months in prison for stealing his church's hurricane relief funds. Noah Thomas pleaded guilty to a federal charge in April. Thomas was pastor of Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, which saw its building in New Orleans flooded following Hurricane Katrina. The church did not have flood insurance and received a $252,000 federal disaster loan and a $35,000 grant from the Bush-Clinton Katrina fund. Prosecutors said Thomas deposited the $35,000 into a bank account he controlled, along with the initial $10,000 loan payment. Authorities said Thomas spent at least $10,000 of the relief money on a personal vehicle. Court records show Thomas also obligated his small congregation for a $39,000 loan for church furniture and accessories.

Police: Milk vomit frat prank causes Ariz. crash

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP)—Police say members of an Arizona State University fraternity vomited milk from a campus bridge and caused a car crash that injured two people. Tempe police Sgt. Steve Carbajal says the prank caused a woman in one car to stop in the road Monday night. Another car smashed into it from behind. He says the woman and her 6-year-old daughter suffered only minor injuries. University police say they are investigating the alleged prank.

Good Housekeeping

Edward Sorano and Scott Ellis didn't have a big garden budget for their Woodland Hills home, but they created a lovely outdoor area with Indonesian fabrics, gurgling fountains and tropical plants.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Scott Ellis reimagined the landscape, adding Japanese maple, oleander, canna and Hawaiian ti plants. He placed $12 palms in oversized pots around the pool.

An affordable tropical oasis

LOS ANGELES TIMES

The dining chairs, re-covered in vinyl from a downtown Los Angeles fabric store, and the hefty glass-topped dining table are from garage sales.

By LISA BOONE

(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Lounging on a chaise beneath a Balinese umbrella in the back yard of Edward Sorano and Scott Ellis, you can imagine yourself on vacation at a tropical resort. Surrounded by tiki torches, Indonesian fabrics, gurgling fountains and tropical plants, you half-expect someone to take your drink order.

The illusion is intentional, said the Woodland Hills residents, who created a retreat that reflects their memories of trips to Thailand and Hawaii.

"The gardens of Thailand and those surrounding their temples are beautiful and calm," Sorano says. "I promised myself that if I ever bought a home, I would incorporate that look and feel."

That home, a 1960 fixer-upper in northwestern Los Angeles purchased seven years ago, came with a neglected pool, dull redwood fencing and empty flower beds edged in red brick. The interior needed updating, too—new bathrooms and flooring—so little money was left for tackling the exterior. Sorano, a heart-monitor technician, and Ellis, a software developer, took on the challenge of evoking Bangkok's Sukhothai Hotel but on a Motel 6 budget.

Today, the area is transformed thanks to purchases at garage and estate sales, thrift stores and the clearance shelves at places such as Costco, Lamps Plus and Osh.

The outdoor dining room is defined by white floor-to-ceiling sheers, $10 a pair from IKEA, that seem to float in the wind. The curtains are hung from bamboo dowels that are attached to the patio's awning with clear fishing line.

Durable 12-inch-square porcelain tile helps the room feel distinct from the house and the garden. A dramatic bar, a $50 garage-sale find, anchors one corner of the room. Sorano and Ellis replaced the water-damaged front doors with plywood, repainted the bar red and black and added metal decoration from HomeGoods. New castors allow easy movement for events such as the holiday party they host every year.

A nearby marble buffet was an inexpensive purchase because of a chip. The dining chairs, re-covered in vinyl, and the hefty glass-topped dining table are all from garage sales. The wrought-iron chandelier from Illuminations can be dressed up or down with greens and flowers, depending on the occasion.

Ellis re-imagined the landscape, adding Japanese maple, oleander, canna and Hawaiian ti plants. He placed $12 palms from Home Depot in oversize pots from Costco and Osh around the pool. Tall bamboo provides privacy and shade. "You can split it in half or more, depending on the original container size," Ellis says of the bamboo. "The new plants will grow as full and lush as the original."

Sorano and Ellis emphasize they were not working with a five-figure budget—"just our imagination and a little sweat," Sorano says. In the end, he estimates they spent about $4,000 for the furniture (including seating areas around the pool), water features, tile, bar, curtains, pots and plants. Among their money-saving strategies: building their own little fountain with a small pump and $20 glazed pot, and shopping off-season. "Now is the time to buy space heaters!" Sorano says.

But when asked about a striking mustard-hued ceramic pot, Sorano gulps and pauses with a sheepish look. Eventually he confesses to spending $130 on it. "Let's just say we went back twice before we bought that," he says, laughing.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

"The gardens of Thailand and those surrounding their temples are beautiful and calm," Edward Sorano says. "I promised myself that if I ever bought a home, I would incorporate that look and feel."

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Homeowners in Woodland Hills, a Los Angeles neighborhood, created a backyard retreat that reflects their memories of trips to Thailand and Hawaii.

The smartest tool for completing fall chores? Your computer

By KATHLEEN HOM
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

It's time for homeowners to start tackling that fall home maintenance checklist before the hostile winds and freezing temperatures of winter roll in. For motivation, we found some Web sites and videos that make these chores seem moderately easy.

Reduce your home heating costs (from www.howcast.com)

A Web video offers tips about how to lower heating costs while being more ecologically conscious. For example, homeowners can do such simple things as wear sweaters, install boiler blankets and pipe insulation, or close draperies during the evenings. Other reminders: Some gas or electric companies offer free energy audits that assess the efficiency of rooms and suggest improvements. And some utility companies pay for programmable thermostats or subsidize roofing insulation.

Sweep into winter with a clean chimney (from www.moneypit.com)

"The Money Pit," a home improvement radio show, includes an article on its Web site about how to keep a chimney safe. Among the advice: Inspect for cracks or other external structural damage, clean out the flue (dirty flues are the "leading cause of chimney fires") and know what to ask a chimney sweep before hiring one.

ON THE NET

For a simple way to link to these tips and videos, see this story at www.washingtonpost.com/homeandgarden

Installing blown-in insulation (from www.easy2diy.com)

A cartoon tutorial includes nine narrated frames that make installing blown-in insulation in exterior walls look relatively straightforward. The video includes details such as where to find studs, where to drill holes and how to patch walls. Don't worry about taking notes, because you can scroll down the page for a shopping list, related how-tos, what you need to know before you begin and step-by-step instructions.

Make your doors draft-free (from www.thisoldhouse.com)

The television program "This Old House" has a Web site full of videos and how-tos from its magazine. In one article, learn the seven steps for installing weatherstripping around a door. The graphics and photos with each step make the project seem less complicated. To help you decide whether you can do this yourself, there's a shopping list, estimated project time and budget, and a warning about the skill level and patience required for the job.

Readying the garden for the chill (from www.hgtv.com)

Good for the novice gardener, an HGTV article offers such common-sense tips as bringing in tender plants and turning off automatic sprinklers. But it also provides lots of links that delve into details about other topics, such as sealing concrete lawn ornaments (to prevent breakage) and constructing a cold frame (to extend the harvest season of winter vegetables).

Tents, canopies bring shade to backyard gatherings

By FRANCES STEAD SELLERS
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

For years, my friend Sally and I shared a predicament when it came to eating outdoors during the summer. Too much sun. And whenever there was a whisper of light rain, we both wished we had, well, a roof over our heads.

TENT RESOURCES

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

- **Big Sky Tents**: www.bigskytent.com (Includes a page on decorative options at www.bigskytent.com/products/decorative.html)
- **E-Z Up Instant Shelters**: www.ezup.com
- **Maharaja Tent Co.**: www.maharajatent.com
- **Raj Tents**: www.rajtents.com
- **Sangeeta International**: www.indiantents.com
- **Taluka Tent Overseas**: www.talukatent.com

This year we solved those problems—with tents. We have the shade we've wanted in two very different styles. What has surprised us as the late-summer days shorten toward autumn is how a fabric shelter, far cheaper and more flexible than a sunroom or gazebo, takes the chill off the evening and extends the days we sit out.

Sally spent $1,400 (plus shipping) on a custom-designed canvas tent; I spent less than a tenth of that for a mass-produced urethane-coated polyester canopy. She put in a special order with a family-run business half a world a way; I clicked through the L.L. Bean Web site. Her shelter was shipped by sea and arrived in jute sacking sewn up with blue twine; mine came by UPS in a rectangular cardboard box, with preprinted return instructions. It took two people to heave Sally's folded canvas out to her terrace and two more to lug the iron poles into place. Then I came across the 10-by-10-foot International E-Z Up Dome II shelter in the L.L. Bean catalog in a leafy green that blended with the house's shutters and cost $115; at 30-something pounds, my canopy is light enough for one person to carry around or pop into the back of a car. (It even has a storage bag with wheels.)

The magical thing about our E-Z Up, the reason my husband, Tim, and I love it, is that it really is easy to put up: It works like a collapsible umbrella but with four telescoping legs (one at each corner) that can be clicked into place at three heights. It may not amount to sitting under the outstretched limbs of a majestic tree, but our E-Z Up makes shade in a matter of minutes. And as the sun moves, so can our shade.

THE WASHINGTON POST
The India-based Taluka Tent Overseas sells nearly 20 types of tents, including the Jaigarh.

Tents help extend time spent outdoors into the fall. Taluka Tent Overseas sells the Amber.

THE WASHINGTON POST

The International EZ-Up Dome II Shelter.

THE WASHINGTON POST

KITCHEN MAGIC

Grilled Chicken with Fruit Salad

1 medium (about 3 pounds) cantaloupe
1 medium bunch (about 1 pound) spinach
3/4 pound seedless red grapes
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon olive or salad oil
Salt
4 medium skinless, boneless chicken-breast halves, 1 pound
1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1/4 pound (1 cup) blue cheese, crumbled

1. Cut cantaloupe into 1-inch chunks. Reserve about half of spinach leaves to line platter later; chop remaining spinach leaves. Cut each grape in half. In large bowl, combine cantaloupe, chopped spinach, grape halves, lemon juice, olive or salad oil, and 1/2 teaspoon salt; toss to mix.

2. Sprinkle smooth side of chicken-breast halves with coarsely ground black pepper and 1 teaspoon salt. Spray nonstick 10-inch skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Over medium heat, cook chicken-breast halves, pepper-side down, 4 minutes or until chicken is golden. Turn chicken breasts and cook 5 minutes longer or until juices run clear when chicken is pierced with a knife.

3. To serve, line platter with reserved spinach leaves. Sprinkle spinach with all but 2 tablespoons blue cheese. Arrange cantaloupe salad and chicken-breast halves over spinach. Sprinkle remaining blue cheese on salad. Serves 4.

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Terminal connections

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
(C) 2008 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: In a couple of earlier articles you mentioned attaching or tightening wires around their "terminals." What are terminals, and how do I attach a wire to one?—Gerry P., Huntsville, Ala.

A: A "terminal," in the parlance of minor electrical repair, is a common term for the position in an electrical device where a connection is made or broken. In short, it's where you hook the wires up. A terminal in a small electrical item, such as a lamp or a receptacle, is generally a common screw—you'll typically see two terminals (screws) side by side.

To connect a wire to a terminal, the insulation around the tip of the wire is stripped away (so that the bare wire will contact the terminal, completing the connection). The wire is then bent around the terminal, underneath the screw head, and the screw is tightened just enough to hold the wire snugly.

Connecting the wire to the terminal properly is essential to make sure a receptacle works. Wire that is nicked and scratched or that is loosely connected to the terminal can interfere with the flow of electric current (meaning the receptacle won't work right). Bare wire extending past a screw terminal can cause a short circuit if it touches another metal part.

Fixing these problems can be as simple as ensuring a clean, snug connection to the terminal. To do this, always turn off power to the circuit and test, using a circuit tester, to make sure no current is reaching the unit. Then, access the connector area of the unit (in a low-voltage thermostat, that's behind the control dial; in a wall receptacle, unscrew the receptacle and tug out from its metal box). Locate the terminal screws and inspect the wire ends for damage.

Scratched wire can be clipped away; strip a segment of wire behind it and reattach to the terminal. Make sure the bare wire wraps completely around the terminal. The start of the plastic insulation should barely touch the screw head, and no bare wire should jut out from the terminal.

HOME TIP: A circuit tester is an essential part of a home electrical kit; always use it prior to starting any electrical work.

Send questions or home-repair tips to homeguru2000@hotmail.com, or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

The Good Life

Is civility dead?

Trying to tame the rude and rowdy

By DAN ZAK
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Every Sunday afternoon, football fans will be ejected from stadiums nationwide for doing things we expect them to do: acting drunk, verbally harassing the other team and its fans, pouring beer over someone's head and calling him a "self-righteous Belichickian."

The National Football League released an official code of conduct for spectators last month. With it, the NFL seems to say, "Let's keep this civilized, you animals." Sip your beer, the NFL urges, but don't guzzle it. Cheer for your team, but don't curse. Instead of getting pulled into the rowdiness in a nearby row, send a text message to stadium security. They'll swoop in and defuse the situation, and you can remain anonymous.

Civility, historically celebrated in lofty axioms by noble peoples, has evolved over the past decade into a full-on movement of the masses. It's being trumpeted and incorporated by universities and private associations, by entire municipalities, by Internet users yearning for an online code of conduct and, yes, by a professional sports league that seems to exist solely to sell beer to adrenaline-pumped hotheads.

Tracts on manners have been written for hundreds of years. During his childhood schooling, George Washington, for example, transcribed the 16th-century "Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation," which includes this quaint maxim: *Put not off your Cloths in the presence of Others, nor go out your Chamber half Drest.* Curiously, the NFL omitted that rule from its code.

The point is, we're no longer focused on how to formally address royalty (protocol) or which fork to use first (etiquette). Now we're simply lobbing official reminders at one another to keep things cool. We've evolved into a highly technical, accomplished, more egalitarian society over several millennia, but we still need encouragement to be kind and decent and deferential.

Does that mean we are any less civil today than in the past?

It's always risky to compare eras, cautions P.M. Forni, founder of the Civility Project at Johns Hopkins University and author of *The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude*. In certain ways we are more civil. In other ways, especially when it comes to traditional forms of deference, we are losing ground.

"An example I use often is that of a pregnant woman on a bus," Forni says. "Maybe there are fewer youngsters that give their seat on the bus to the pregnant woman today than there were generations ago. But when that woman steps into her workplace today, the number of men who consider her a professional and intellectual peer is higher than in my father's generation."

The Baltimore-Washington area is, apparently, the cradle of modern civility. Heck, Miss Manners lives here. And we have the Civility Project, which studies the effects of civility on quality of life. There's also the International Association of Protocol Consultants, a D.C. nonprofit group that in the past year has refocused its mission from promoting etiquette to promoting civility through educational partnerships and conferences.

Alinda Lewris, the volunteer executive director for the association, has interviewed chief executives of Fortune 500 companies to understand the impact of incivility in the workplace. Data from the past 10 years suggest that we think society is getting less civil, that workplace bullying is rising and that co-workers, for the first time, are the No. 1 cause of work-related stress.

"It's not just in the workplace, but almost in every venue, be it at the movie house or on the road or in a hospital," says Lewris.

Or in a football stadium. But the NFL's new code of conduct seems to have improved the spectating environment, at least anecdotally, says the league's vice president of security, Milt Ahlerich. Last week he was at FedEx Field, looking over the shoulder of the employee in charge of receiving text messages from irritated Redskins fans. Messages are passed to security workers, who then visit the offending seat, row or section to enforce the code. It's citizen watching citizen for the good of civility. Ahlerich calls it "fan empowerment."

What about the fine line between having a rowdy good time and offending other people?

"There's not a scientific formula here, but generally we'd say that when you are repeatedly interfering with others fans' experience, then you're over the line," he says. "Can you cheer loudly? Absolutely. Can you be enthusiastic and disappointed? You certainly can. Can you assault or harass someone who's wearing another team's jersey? No, you cannot."

The tension in a football stadium makes it a ripe venue for rude behavior. Stress, in fact, is one of the four main causes of incivility, Forni has concluded. The others are time (hurried, disrespectful manners), self-interest (the preoccupied teenager not noticing the pregnant woman on the bus) and anonymity. The latter cause fuels a whole universe of incivility on the Internet. Look no further than The Washington Post's Web site, whose comment sections are awash in venom.

Why? Frustration? To simply get attention or a reaction? Or because there are no real consequences online, where everyone surfs in relative anonymity? Half of Internet users want a universal voluntary code of conduct for bloggers and commentators, according to a poll released in May by DLA Piper, a global legal services organization. A third of bloggers want one; another third are opposed. But would a list of suggested rules do anything?

"I don't think it's a waste of time," says California blogger Gina Cooper, founder of the liberal bloggers' convention Netroots Nation. "I think it's important: Online, you build a community, and communities are built around common values." It's up to individuals to create and uphold codes of conduct in their own spheres of influence, she says.

As a result of her work in politics and on the Web, a stream of explicit and hateful messages has flowed to Cooper's inbox. Responding would only reward bad behavior, she says. A forum with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., at July's Netroots convention provided a keen example of how incivility benefits no one. The forum was addled by protesters bent on causing a ruckus, not contributing substantive objections to the debate, Cooper says. The same can be said for the heckling during Sen. John McCain's acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention this month. There's a difference between calmly expressing frustration and disrupting an event.

Either way, Cooper expects online anonymity to erode as we live our lives more and more online. This may lead to more self-restraint. Lewris envisions ever-increasing dialogues on civility. Forni would like to see civility become a concrete part of school. Regardless of these expectations, at least people are talking about it more today than in past generations. But are we really more likely to act civil if there are codes telling us to do so?

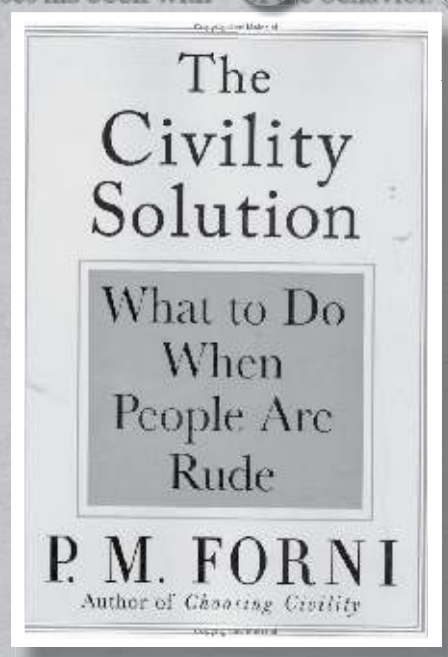
"It depends," Forni says. Codes "can have a backlash effect. We don't embrace codes very gleefully. What we *do* know is good manners and civility and politeness can be taught, especially to children, with very good effect. We know, for instance, that youngsters who have been trained in civility-based relational competence are less likely to become abusive and violent adults. ...

"Civility, politeness and good manners are not trivial, because they do the everyday busywork of goodness."

How to deal with bad behavior

By DAN ZAK
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

In his book "The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude" (St. Martin's Press, 2008), P.M. Forni presents social quandaries and proposes civil solutions to them. He closes his book with a tipsheet on dealing with rudeness, composed by psychologist Arthur Ciaramicoli. If someone's being uncivil to you, consider these points, adapted from the tipsheet, before you react.



Don't personalize rude behavior. It's unlikely to be about you, even though it's directed at you.

Be aware that rude behavior comes from various sources (sleep deprivation, depression, stress, illness, insecurity, etc.).

Respond with calmness rather than behavior that escalates rude behavior.

"An eye for an eye" is a poor approach; don't turn another's insecurity into your own.

Self-righteous behavior only reflects poorly on you; don't use the opportunity to demean another.

Try to address the underlying cause of the behavior. ("I can see you are very stressed. Maybe I could help if you tell me what's bothering you.")

When necessary, set limits tactfully and assertively, not aggressively.

If the conversation remains irrational, know when to quit.

Don't assume rudeness is a permanent part of someone's personality. It is a pattern of rudeness (not one mishap) that determines character.

In the end, always let empathy—the ability to read others accurately—be your guide in understanding rudeness, knowing how to respond to a rude individual and knowing when to leave the scene.

Bob Weber Jr.'s Slylock Fox and Comics for Kids

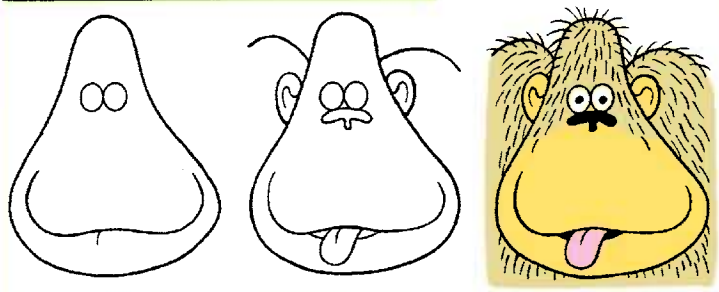
Which two baby beavers are exactly alike?

Answer -- Numbers two and five.

Slylock Fox has a reputation for being a deductive and analytical genius. The deli worker decided to test Slylock's abilities. He asked, "If I stand 3 feet tall and have a 26-inch waist and 35-inch chest, what do I weigh?" Slylock answered quickly. What was his reply?

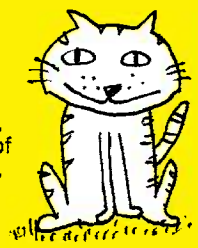
Solution -- Slylock said the deli worker weighs cheese, pastrami, turkey and macaroni. Slylock also has a reputation for having a sense of humor.

HOW TO DRAW an orangutan



YOUR DRAWING

Today's terrific artist is Aaron Cooper, age 11, of Tampa, FL



Submit your drawings at **www.kidcartoonists.com**

Cheese is made from the milk of ...

a) Cows
b) Goats
c) Camels
d) Buffalo
e) Sheep

Answer -- All of the above!

Find six differences between these panels.

www.kidcartoonists.com

Answer -- Dust, headlight, tongue, chimney, shoelace and net handle.

New! The fourth **Find the six differences** collection is here. Send $4 (check/money order in U.S. funds made payable to King Features) with your name and address to **Six Differences No. 4,** P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

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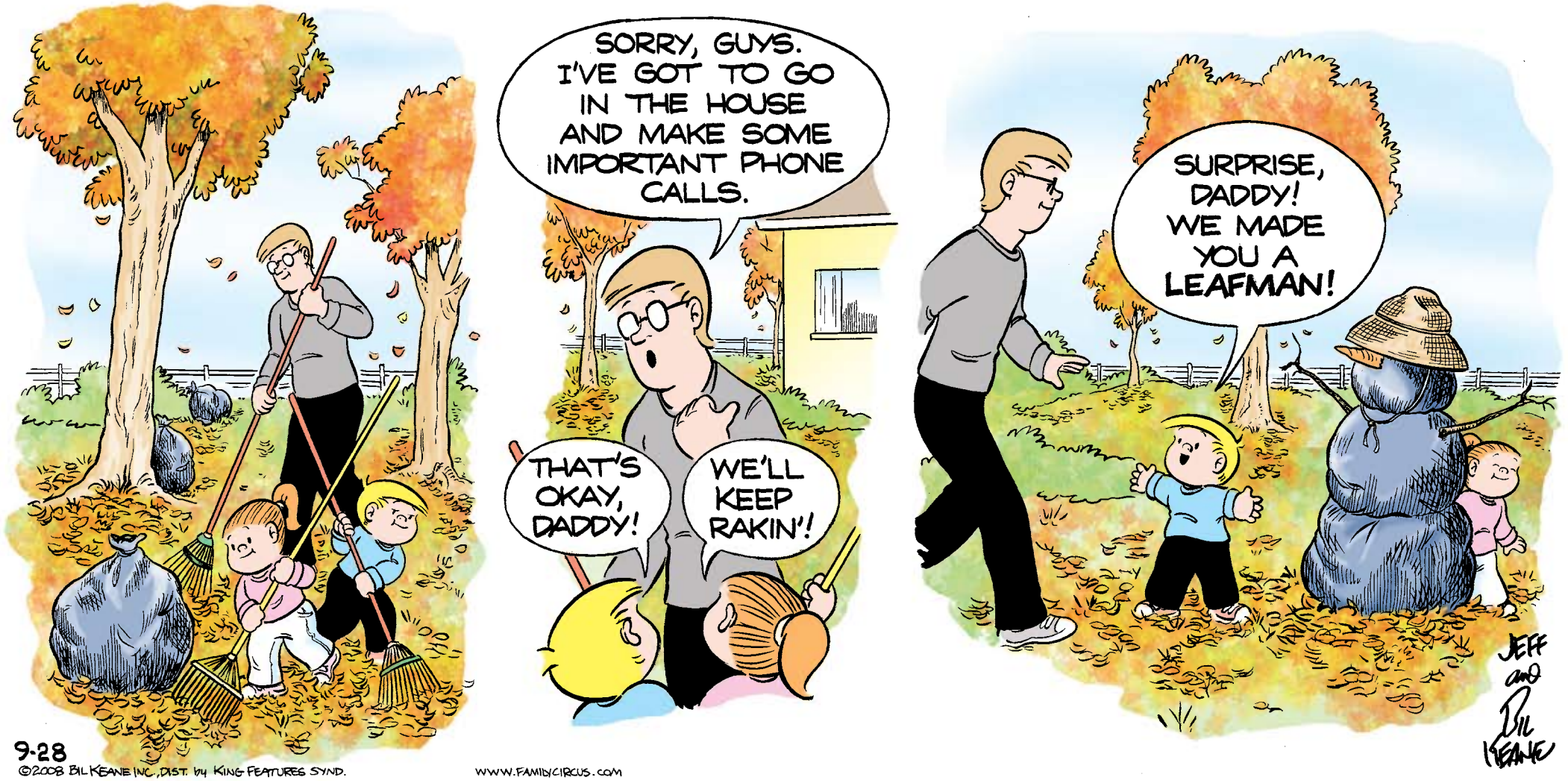
THE FAMILY CIRCUS®

By Bil Keane


SORRY, GUYS. I'VE GOT TO GO IN THE HOUSE AND MAKE SOME IMPORTANT PHONE CALLS.
THAT'S OKAY, DADDY!
WE'LL KEEP RAKIN'!
SURPRISE, DADDY! WE MADE YOU A LEAFMAN!
JEFF and BIL KEANE
9-28
©2008 BIL KEANE INC., DIST. by KING FEATURES SYND.
WWW.FAMILYCIRCUS.COM

Mort Walker's beetle bailey®

COME ON, BEETLE, WE HAVE TO PUT THIS WIND SIGNAL ON TOP OF HILL 32
"WE"?
EXCUSE ME. I MEANT "YOU"
I THOUGHT SO
HOLD IT, BEETLE! I FORGOT MY MAP
WAIT HERE. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK
CAN I GO SIT UNDER A TREE?
WWW.MORTWALKER.COM
I SAID WAIT HERE, AND I MEAN RIGHT HERE!
YOU'LL HAVE TO MOVE, BUDDY!
SORRY, I GOTTA STAY HERE!
9-28
GREG+ MORT WALKER
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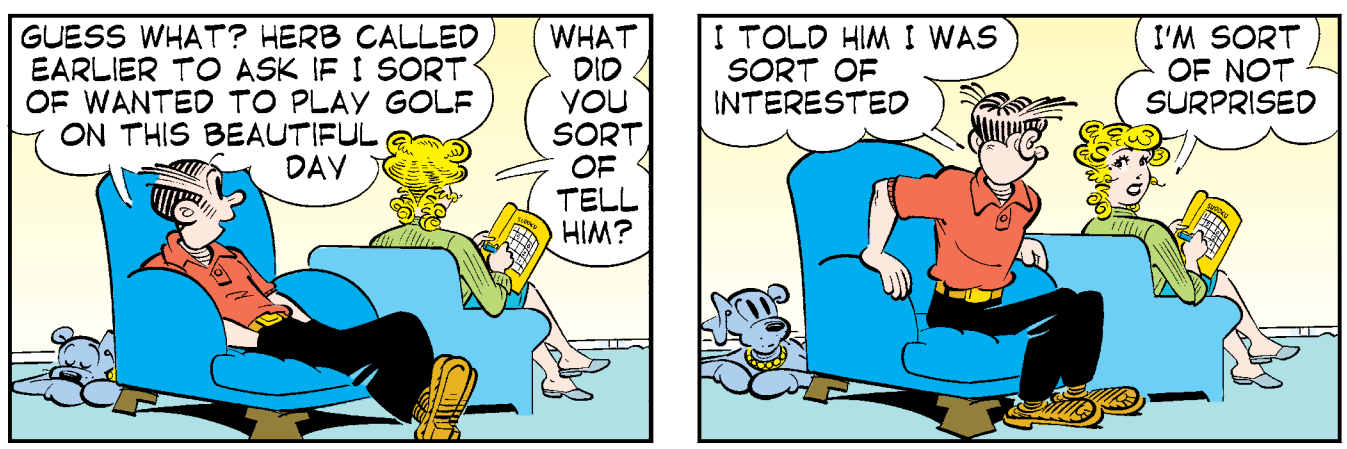
BEETLE! CAN'T YOU EVER OBEY ORDERS?!
ROAD WORK

BLONDIE

BY DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL


GUESS WHAT? HERB CALLED EARLIER TO ASK IF I SORT OF WANTED TO PLAY GOLF ON THIS BEAUTIFUL DAY
WHAT DID YOU SORT OF TELL HIM?
I TOLD HIM I WAS SORT OF INTERESTED
I'M SORT OF NOT SURPRISED
BE HONEST, HONEY...YOU'RE UPSET BECAUSE I'D RATHER PLAY GOLF THAN TAKE CARE OF CHORES TODAY, AREN'T YOU?
I TOLD YOU I DON'T MIND IF YOU PLAY SOME GOLF TODAY
www.blondie.com
SEE? YOU SAID SOME GOLF! THAT MEANS YOU DON'T REALLY WANT ME TO PLAY AT ALL!
THAT ISN'T WHAT I MEANT
I WANT YOU TO LOOK ME IN THE EVE AND TELL ME YOU WANT ME TO PLAY A LOT OF GOLF TODAY, SWEETHEART
I WANT YOU TO PLAY A LOT OF GOLF TODAY, SWEETHEART
THAT SURE DIDN'T SOUND VERY CONVINCING!
I JUST WANT YOU TO DO WHATEVER YOU THINK IS BEST, DAGWOOD!
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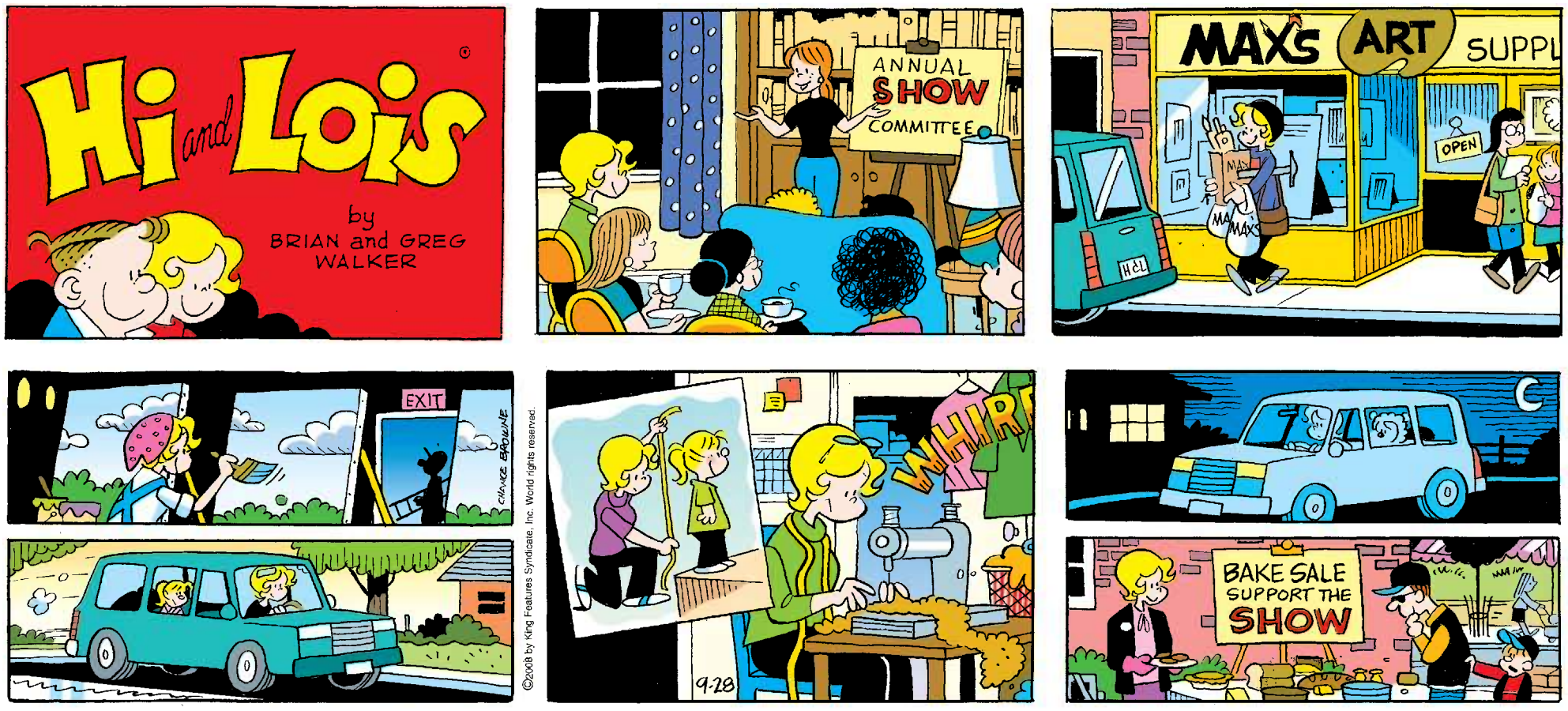
AH-HA! SO WHAT YOU REALLY WANT ME TO DO IS TO STAY HOME AND WORK AROUND THE HOUSE, ISN'T IT?!
9-28
TOOTSIE SEEMED A LITTLE MIFFED THAT I WANTED TO PLAY GOLF TODAY
BLONDIE PRACTICALLY PUSHED ME OUT THE DOOR!


Hi and Lois
by
BRIAN and GREG
WALKER
ANNUAL
SHOW
COMMITTEE
MAXS ART SUPPL
OPEN
EXIT
CHANCE BROWNE
WHIRR
9-28
BAKE SALE
SUPPORT THE
SHOW
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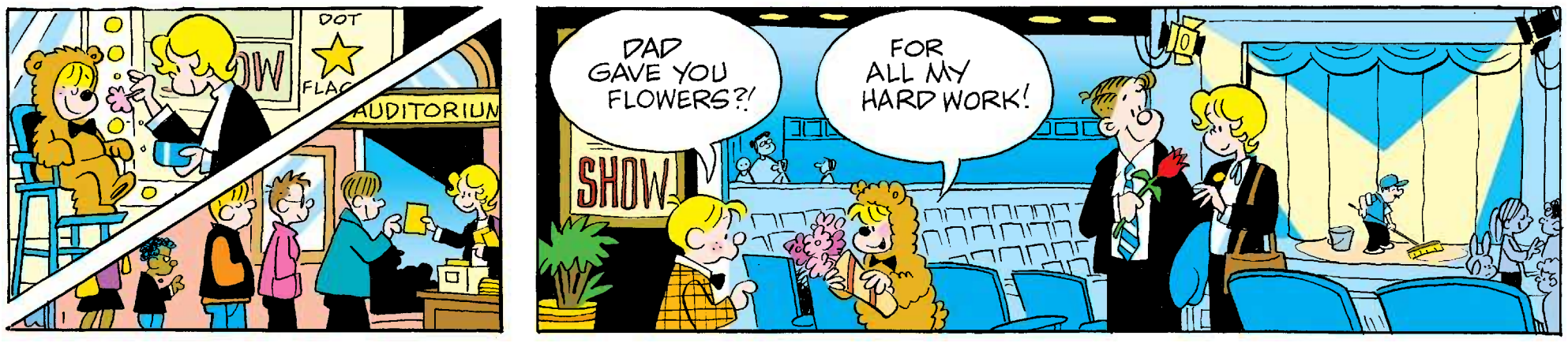
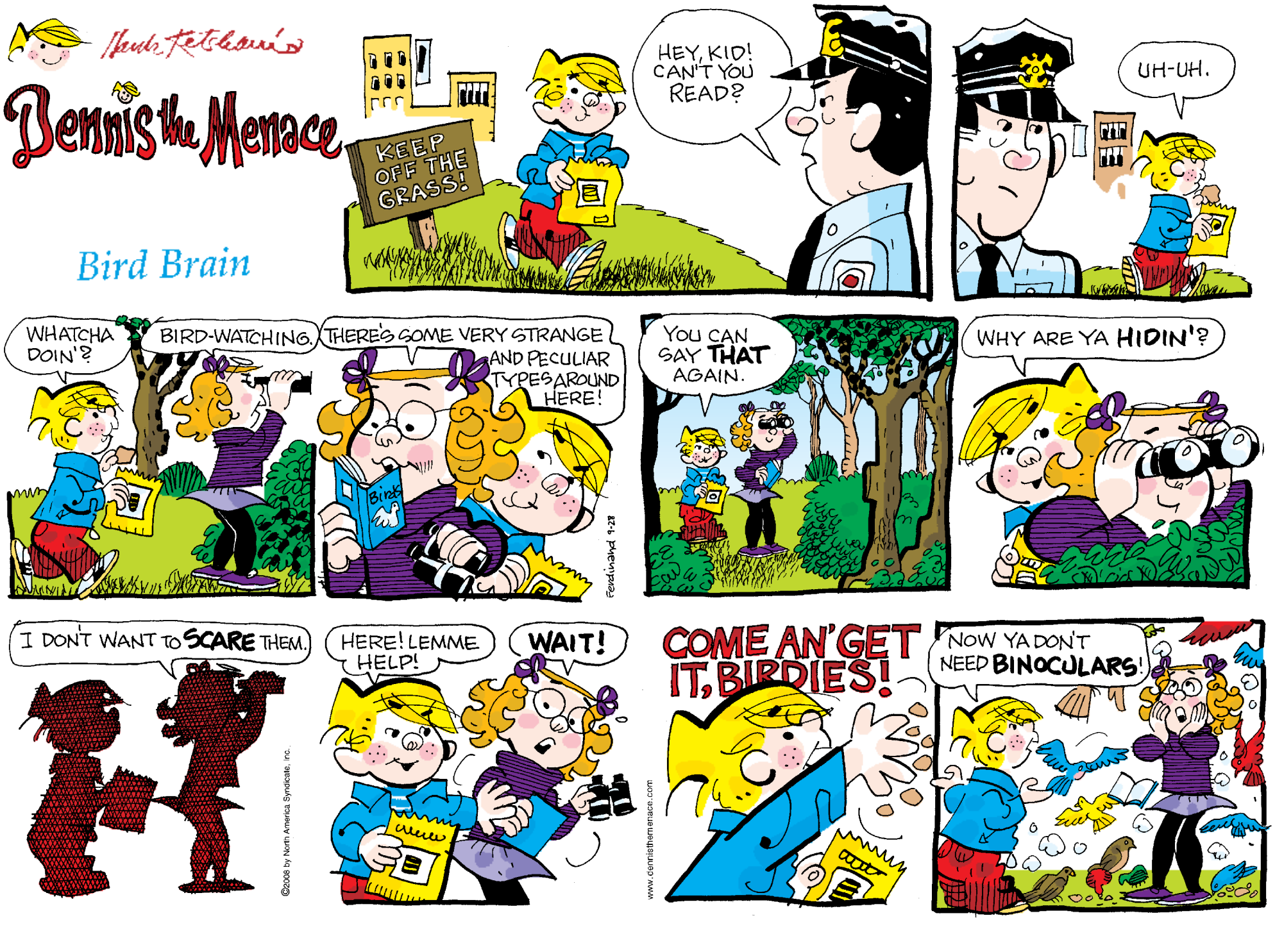

DOT
FLAG
AUDITORIUM
DAD GAVE YOU FLOWERS?!
FOR ALL MY HARD WORK!
SHOW


Hank Ketcham's
Dennis the Menace
Bird Brain
KEEP OFF THE GRASS!
HEY, KID! CAN'T YOU READ?
UH-UH.
WHATCHA DOIN'?
BIRD-WATCHING.
THERE'S SOME VERY STRANGE AND PECULIAR TYPES AROUND HERE!
Birds
Ferd'nand 9-28
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.
WHY ARE YA HIDIN'?
I DON'T WANT TO SCARE THEM.
©2008 by North America Syndicate, Inc.
HERE! LEMME HELP!
WAIT!
COME AN' GET IT, BIRDIES!
www.dennisthemenace.com
NOW YA DON'T NEED BINOCULARS!

BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
ZOE, DID YOU PUT YOUR WATER GLASS IN THE DISHWASHER?
LET ME THINK...
AFTER I FINISHED DRINKING THE WATER, I SET THE GLASS ON THE COFFEE TABLE AND WENT TO USE THE BATHROOM.
THEN I HEARD HAMMIE CALLING ME, SO I WENT IN AND HELPED HIM GLUE A DUCK FEATHER ONTO HIS SHOE...
©2008 BABY BLUES PARTNERSHIP DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE 9-28
OH! THEN I REMEMBERED THAT THE TOWEL HAD FALLEN ONTO THE BATHROOM FLOOR AFTER I WASHED MY HANDS, SO I WENT BACK AND HUNG IT UP NICE AND NEATLY.
A-A-AND, I ALSO WIPED THE WATER SPOTS OFF THE MIRROR, JUST LIKE YOU SHOWED ME!
ARE YOU PROUD OF ME, OR WHAT?
YOU BET!
www.babyblues.com
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WATER GLASS?
WHAT WATER GLASS?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

Salome's Stars

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) The changing season brings new experiences as well as challenges for the ever-adventurous Aries. Your social life expands, as do the opportunities at your workplace.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) That recent period of uncertainty has passed. You can now feel more confident about making decisions, especially those that relate to an important personal relationship.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Although you might be faced with a number of tasks on your to-do list, try to take time out to enjoy the arts. Music, especially, can be soothing to the sensitive soul of a Gemini.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) A disagreement with a colleague or friend is best resolved with open and frank discussion. Trying to force the other party to see things your way is bound to backfire.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) That Leonine pride might be ruffled by a colleague's challenge to one of your pet ideas. But stop growling and listen. You could learn something that will work to your advantage.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Someone in authority might decide to select you as a candidate for a project that carries more responsibilities. Be prepared to show why you're the right choice for the job.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) That new workplace problem should be dealt with as soon as possible. Leaving it unresolved for too long could lead to an even more unsettling and time-consuming situation.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You might have to do some fancy juggling to keep both your work responsibilities and personal obligations on track. But ultimately, you'll work it all out, as you always do.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) You might hear some upsetting things about a situation in your life. But don't be swayed by talk. Demand proof before making any decisions on the matter.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Don't risk depleting those precious energy levels by taking on more tasks than you can realistically handle. Also, remember to ask for help when you need it.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) It might be difficult for the Aquarian who is used to giving advice to take counsel when offered. But it's a good idea to listen to what trusted friends feel you should know.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Things might be a little unsettled as you move through a period of reassessment. But once you get your priorities sorted out, you should be ready to tackle an important decision.

BORN THIS WEEK: You're able to achieve a happy balance in your productive life by never feeling overwhelmed or underappreciated.

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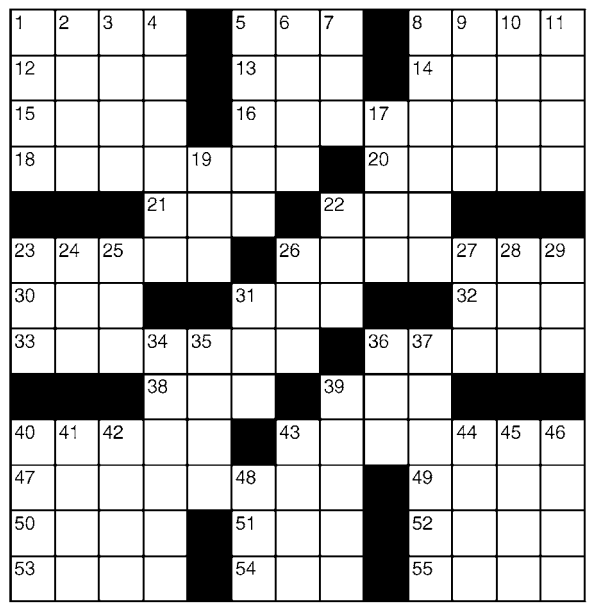
King Crossword



ACROSS
1 Con game
5 Martian vessel
8 A really long time
12 Imogene of "Your Show of Shows"
13 Tier
14 Smart-phone name
15 Iowa city
16 Dunce
18 Lucille Ball, notably
20 "- Landing"
21 Hostel
22 Mainlander's souvenir
23 Lost color
26 Minuteman's foe
30 Raw rock
31 Journal
32 Altar affirmative
33 Sailor's wool jacket
36 Bravery
38 Crone
39 Women's -
40 Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin, e.g.
43 Heavy fog
47 Marx Brothers movie
49 Look lecherously
50 Duel tool
51 Mimic
52 Nevada city
53 Disarray
54 Uncooked
55 Pod dweller

DOWN
1 Cicatrix
2 Arrive
3 Scored 100 on
4 Old name for a 5-iron
5 City-related
6 Comestibles
7 Possess
8 Of a cultural group
9 Sandwich cookie
10 "Swell!"
11 Lays down the lawn
17 Supplemented, with "out"
19 Conclusion
22 Journey segment
23 Burst
24 "All the Things You -"
25 Meadow
26 Deteriorate
27 Lubricate
28 Big bother
29 Craggy peak
31 Trail behind
34 Throttles
35 Feedbag fill
36 By way of
37 Soak up
39 Warner Bros. skunk Pepé
40 Same as above
41 Put one over on
42 Summertime desserts
43 Imago-in-training
44 Curved molding
45 Arm bone
46 Drudge
48 Galley implement

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top ten MILITARY FORCES

ACTIVE TROOPS

1. China
2. United States
3. India
4. North Korea
5. Russia
6. South Korea
7. Pakistan
8. Iran
9. Turkey
10. Vietnam

Source: Wikipedia

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KING CROSSWORD LAST SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

L	E	A	■	M	O	L	D	■	N	O	A	H
O	R	R	■	E	P	E	E	■	I	N	T	O
C	O	C	K	T	A	I	L	■	S	E	E	D
I	S	S	U	E	R	■	E	V	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	D	O	T	■	T	A	I	L	O	R
H	O	N	O	R	■	V	E	T	■	O	B	I
A	G	E	S	■	T	E	D	■	B	R	I	G
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Nation

Dems claim progress in reaching bailout deal

By JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS and DAVID ESPO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Bush administration and Congress anxiously revived negotiations Friday on a $700 billion financial bailout, one day after the largest bank collapse in U.S. history provided a brutal reminder of the risks of failure. Democrats talked optimistically of agreement by the end of the weekend.

"I'm convinced that by Sunday we will have an agreement that people can understand on this bill," predicted Massachusetts Rep. Barney Frank, a key Democrat in eight days of up-and-down talks designed to stave off an economic disaster.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi added that "progress is being made," although the day came and went without senior lawmakers from both parties sitting down together.

Neither she nor Frank divulged details at a late-afternoon news conference in the Capitol, though there was word of one fresh Democratic concession.

Pelosi told fellow Democrats during a closed-door meeting that the idea of letting judges rewrite mortgages to help bankrupt homeowners avoid foreclosure won't be a part of the emergency legislation. That provision, pushed by several Democrats, would be a dealbreaker for Republicans whose votes are needed to pass the measure, she said, according to lawmakers at the meeting.

Democrats and Bush administration officials also said they were willing to include House Republicans' idea of having the government insure distressed mortgages - but only as an option, rather than a replacement for the administration's more sweeping approach.

Pelosi

Democratic and Republican staff aides met into the night on Capitol Hill. They were going line by line through legislative proposals in an attempt to clear the way for lawmakers to bargain over the weekend even as presidential contenders John McCain and Barack Obama agreed during their presidential debate Friday night that Congress must act soon.

Asked directly whether he intends to vote for a rescue plan taking shape in Congress, McCain said, "I hope so. ... sure."

"We haven't seen the language yet," Obama said. "I do think there is constructive work being done."

Meanwhile, new details emerged of a remarkably tumultuous White House meeting on Thursday. With the session breaking up in disarray, according to two participants, President Bush issued an appeal, saying, "Can't we just all go out and say things are OK?" The group around the table, congressional leaders as well as McCain and Obama, spurned the presidential request for a publicly united front.

Earlier in the White House meeting, Democrats peppered House Republican leader John Boehner of Ohio with questions about the details of an alternative he was backing. At one point, Bush, too, said, "I don't know what the hell they are," recalled one person who was in the room. All the participants spoke on condition of anonymity, saying the meeting was private.

Bush sought to coax the talks back to life on Friday, prodding lawmakers in a morning appearance to "rise to the occasion" - and quickly.

In a sign of progress, House Republicans dispatched their second-ranking leader, Rep. Roy Blunt of Missouri, to join the talks after their objections to an emerging compromise had brought negotiations to a standstill the day before. They demanded "serious consideration" for their plan.

"We want to see a deal happen - there's no doubt about it," said Rep. Eric Cantor, R-Va.

The legislation the administration is promoting would allow the government to buy bad mortgages and other sour assets held by investors, most of them financial companies. That should make those companies more inclined to lend and lift a major weight off the national economy that is already sputtering.

But a significant number of lawmakers, including many House conservatives, say they're against such heavy federal intervention. Under the GOP plan, the government would insure the distressed securities rather than buy them. Tax breaks would provide additional incentives to invest.

Obama, McCain argue over war and taxes in 1st debate

OXFORD, Miss. (AP)—John McCain accused Barack Obama of compiling "the most liberal voting record in the United States Senate" Friday night as the two rivals clashed over taxes, spending, the war in Iraq and more in an intense first debate of the White House campaign. "Mostly that's just me opposing George Bush's wrong-headed policies," shot back the Democrat.

Obama said his Republican rival has been a loyal supporter of the unpopular president, adding that the current economic crisis is "a final verdict on eight years of failed economic policies promoted by President Bush and supported by Sen. McCain."

The two men were polite but pointed as they debated at close quarters for 90 minutes on the University of Mississippi campus.

McCain accused his younger rival of an "incredible thing of voting to cut off funds for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan," a reference to legislation that cleared the Senate more than a year ago.

Obama disputed that, saying he had opposed funding in a bill that presented a "blank check" to the Pentagon while McCain had opposed money in legislation that included a timetable for troop withdrawal.

Obama opposed the invasion of Iraq in 2002, before he was a member of Congress, while McCain voted in the Senate to authorize the war.

"You were wrong" on Iraq, Obama repeated three times in succession. "John, you like to pretend the war began in 2007."

McCain replied that Obama has refused to acknowledge the success of the troop buildup in Iraq that McCain recommended and Bush announced more than a year ago.

AP
John McCain, left, and Barack Obama, center, shake hands with moderator Jim Lehrer at the finish of a presidential debate at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Miss., Friday, Sept. 26, 2008.

ACROSS THE NATION

Subpoenaed Palin aides don't appear at abuse probe

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Seven of Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin's top aides defied subpoenas for their testimony Friday into possible abuse of power by the governor. Palin's chief of staff, Mike Nizich, and six other aides failed to appear at a legislative hearing into whether Palin abused her power when she fired her public safety commissioner this summer. State Senate Judiciary Chairman Hollis French, a Democrat, waited 30 minutes Friday before reading a statement that the witnesses could be found in contempt when the full Legislature convenes in January and that the investigation would go on "in a simple search for the truth."

Sen. Kennedy back home after brief hospital trip

BOSTON (AP)—Sen. Edward Kennedy, who has brain cancer, was taken by ambulance to a hospital Friday near his Cape Cod vacation home after complaining of feeling ill but returned home a few hours later. A statement issued by the 76-year-old senator's office attributed the episode to a change in medications. A 911 call from the Kennedy compound in Hyannis Port came around 5 p.m., said Barnstable police Sgt. Ben Baxter. Kennedy was taken to Cape Cod Hospital and was "alert and responsive" during the trip, Baxter said.

Freight brakeman in deadly LA train collision sues

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The brakeman on the freight train involved in a deadly collision with a commuter train filed a lawsuit Friday against the commuter railroad and the companies that provide its engineers. The lawsuit, filed by Dominick Fravola and his wife, blames the defendants for not properly screening, supervising and training the Metrolink engineer who ran his commuter train past a red signal on Sept. 12 and collided with a Union Pacific freight train. Twenty-five people died in the crash, the nation's deadliest train accident since 1993. The lawsuit also names Veolia Transportation and its subsidiary, Connex Railroad, which employs the Metrolink engineers.

Detroit cop found hanged in park

STERLING HEIGHTS, Mich. (AP)—A Detroit police sergeant whose wife was shot to death in a suspected contract killing has been found hanged in a suburban park. Police tell the Detroit Free Press that 38-year-old Sgt. David Cobb was found dead Friday night in Sterling Heights, a city 15 miles north of downtown Detroit. Cobb's 47-year-old wife, Rose, was fatally shot Dec. 26 in a parking lot on Detroit's east side. In April, police arrested 27-year-old Vincent Smothers, who told police Cobb hired him to kill his wife. Smothers claimed Cobb was having an affair and wanted his wife's life insurance money. He is awaiting trial for murder. Cobb was arrested a day after Smothers. He was released after prosecutors said there wasn't enough evidence to charge him.

Cops: Teen wanted mom dead to pay for breast work

FOUNTAIN, Colo. (AP)—A Colorado teenager hired men to kill his mother so he could use her money to get breast implants for his girlfriend, police said. Nikita Lee Weis, 18, was arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit first-degree murder, said Fountain Deputy Police Chief Mike Barnett. His girlfriend, Sophia Nicole Alsept, and two men police said he hired, Juan Antonio Velez Gonzalez, 18, and Brandon Michael Soroka, 19, were arrested on the same charge. Weis' mother, Hyun Weis, was attacked Thursday with a small wooden baseball bat at her home but escaped, authorities said. She was released Friday from a hospital. Barnett said Weis wanted to sell his mother's car and use money in her bank accounts to pay for breast implants for Alsept, 21.

4 students killed in bus-truck collision in Ind.

LOGANSPORT, Ind. (AP)—A school bus collided with two dump trucks in a horrific crash Friday in rural northern Indiana, killing the four young special-needs students on board and injuring the bus driver, authorities said. The children, ages 5 through 10, all lived in nearby Monticello and attended schools in Logansport that catered to their special needs, Indiana State Police said. The bus driver, identified by police and school officials as Debbie Duvall, 46, of Idaville, was flown to a Fort Wayne hospital, where she was in serious condition Friday night. The two truck drivers were not injured.

Schwarzenegger to convene global climate summit

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, a Republican who has challenged many members of his party to take climate change seriously, said Friday that he plans to invite lawmakers and governmental executives from around the globe to California this fall to address solutions to the problem. The governor said he will invite officials from Europe, as well as from Australia, China, India and other countries, in the hope of forming an international alliance of community and regional leaders. He is planning the conference for November, a month before the United Nations holds its next round of international climate talks in Poland. Governors from all 50 states also will be invited.

Asia

Baby cereal joins tainted list

BEIJING (AP)—The list of products caught in China's tainted milk scandal grew Friday to include baby cereal in Hong Kong and snack foods in Japan, while Taiwan reported three children and a mother with kidney stones in the island's first cases possibly linked to the crisis.

The Japanese government also said it had suspended imports of milk and milk products from China, where some 54,000 children have developed kidney stones or other illnesses after drinking baby formula contaminated with the industrial chemical melamine. Four deaths have been blamed on the tainted milk.

The latest problematic foods were Heinz baby cereal and Silang House steamed potato wasabi crackers. The Hong Kong government said in a statement Friday it found traces of melamine in the products, which were both made in mainland China.

Hong Kong urged the manufacturers to stop selling the products in the Chinese territory. Pittsburgh, Pa.-based Heinz ordered a recall of the baby cereal as a precautionary measure following the government's announcement, it said in a statement on its Web site.

Hundreds of international food companies have set up operations in China in recent years, exposing them to the country's notorious product safety problems. Melamine-tainted products have turned up in an increasing number of Chinese-made exports abroad—from candies to yogurt to rice balls.

2 strong quakes rock Philippine capital

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Two strong earthquakes rocked the Philippine capital and nearby provinces nearly simultaneously Saturday, but no damage or tsunami alerts were reported, a senior seismologist said.

Renato Solidum, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said a "moderately strong" tremor struck late morning Saturday followed by a "stronger one" five minutes later.

The temblors struck off the coast of Mamburao township in Mindoro Occidental province, about 106 miles south of Manila, Solidum said.

He said the earthquakes would not generate tsunamis because they were centered too deep underground. The first quake had a magnitude 5.3 and was centered 51 miles underground and the stronger magnitude 6.5 was about 67 miles deep.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported the first was magnitude 5.6 and the second was a stronger but deeper magnitude 6.1.

Solidum said seismographs have already recorded some small aftershocks.

The earthquakes were reportedly felt as far as Apalit township in Pampanga province, about 137 miles north of the epicenters, he said.

AP

In this video grab taken by Xinhua News Agency at the Beijing Space Command and Control Center in Beijing, China, Sept. 26, 2008, Chinese astronaut Jing Haipeng talks to the command and control center in Shenzhou-7.

Chinese astronauts in final spacewalk countdown

BEIJING (AP)—Astronauts aboard China's Shenzhou 7 spacecraft were making final preparations for the country's first-ever spacewalk planned for Saturday afternoon.

Space suits, one Chinese, the other Russian-made, were fully functional, while all three astronauts aboard the capsule were in good health, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

The 20-minute spacewalk is scheduled for Saturday afternoon; the exact timing depends on the readiness of equipment and personnel. The event will be broadcast live on television, he said.

Performing a successful spacewalk is a key step in mastering techniques for linking two orbiters, technology that will be needed when China moves to create its first space station in the next few years. Risks involve pressurizing and depressurizing the orbital module and ensuring power, life support and other vital systems aboard the spacesuit operate as intended.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Deaths from floods in Vietnam rise to 22

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—Floods triggered by Typhoon Hagupit have killed at least 22 people in northern Vietnam and the death toll could increase as information from isolated villages trickles in, disaster officials said Saturday. In the worst-hit province of Son La, floodwaters swept at least eight people away and another four were reported missing, said disaster official Nguyen Van Loan. Two people were crushed to death when houses destroyed by the rushing waters collapsed onto them, Loan said.

South Korea: North proposes holding military talks

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea has proposed holding military talks with South Korea in what would be the first official contact between the countries since Seoul's new conservative government took office in February, a defense official said Friday. The surprise offer comes amid heightened tensions over North Korea's decision to abandon a disarmament-for-aid pact and to begin reassembling its nuclear reprocessing plant in Yongbyon. The North sent a message Thursday proposing the talks, and the South Korean government is discussing whether to accept the offer, an official at South Korea's Defense Ministry said late Friday.

16 dead from heavy rains in southwest China

BEIJING (AP)—Flash floods and landslides unleashed by heavy rains have killed 16 people in one of the areas hit hardest by the massive May earthquake in China's Sichuan province, the local government said Friday. About 20,000 people affected by the floods were evacuated and have been moved to safer places and given food and water, the city's Communist Party propaganda department said in a statement. The flooding and landslides since Wednesday also have left 48 people missing and 360 people injured in Sichuan's Mianyang city, the agency said. More than 42,000 houses have been destroyed.

World

Russia warship heads to Africa after pirate attack

MOSCOW (AP)—A Russian warship on Friday rushed to intercept a Ukrainian vessel carrying 33 battle tanks and a hoard of ammunition that was seized by pirates off the Horn of Africa—a bold hijacking that again heightened fears about surging piracy and high-seas terrorism.

A U.S. warship is tracking the vessel but there has been no decision about intercepting it, U.S. Defense Department officials said.

"I think we're looking at the full range of options here," Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said.

It was unclear whether the pirates who seized the 530-foot-long cargo ship Faina on Thursday knew what it carried. Still, analysts said it would be extremely difficult to sell such high-profile weaponry like Russian tanks.

The hijacking, with worldwide pirate attacks surging this year, could help rally stronger international support behind France, which has pushed aggressively for decisive action against Somali pirates.

Russian navy spokesman Capt. Igor Dygalo told The Associated Press that the missile frigate Neustrashimy left the Baltic Sea port of Baltiisk a day before the hijacking to cooperate with other unspecified countries in anti-piracy efforts.

But he said the ship was then ordered directly to the Somalia coast after Thursday's attack.

According to the British-based Jane's Information Group, the Neustrashimy is armed with surface-to-air missiles, 100 mm guns and anti-submarine torpedoes.

German cops raid plane, arrest 2 terror suspects

COLOGNE, Germany (AP)—Armed German police boarded a plane minutes before takeoff Friday and arrested a pair of ethnic Somalis who they say wrote a suicide note proclaiming their desire to fight in a holy war and die in a terrorist attack.

A 23-year-old Somali and a 24-year-old German born in Somalia were removed from KLM Flight 1084 to Amsterdam after the early morning raid at Cologne-Bonn Airport, police said.

Authorities said they did not think the men planned to hijack the plane. An airport spokesman said the pair were unarmed.

German media, citing unidentified security sources, widely reported that their final destination was Pakistan, likely a terrorist training camp in the border region with Afghanistan. Neither police nor the Federal Criminal Office, the German equivalent of the FBI, would confirm the destination.

Germany has been threatened with terrorist attacks by radical Islamic groups—largely because of its contingent of troops serving with NATO in Afghanistan—but none have succeeded.

AP

Yves Rossy of Switzerland come into land by parachute after his solo flight from France to England near Dover, England, Friday, Sept. 26, 2008.

Swiss man flies over Channel on jet wing

DOVER, England (AP)—He had nothing above him but four tanks of kerosene and nothing below him but the cold waters of the English Channel. But Yves Rossy leapt from a plane and into the record books on Friday, crossing the channel on a homemade jet-propelled wing.

Rossy jumped from the plane about 8,200 feet over Calais, France, blasting across the narrow body of water and deploying his parachute over the South Foreland lighthouse, delighting onlookers who dotted Dover's famous white cliffs, cheering and waving as Rossy came into view.

Backed by a gentle breeze, Rossy crossed the Channel in 13 minutes, averaging 125 miles per hour. In a final flourish, he did a figure eight as he came over England, although the wind blew him away from his planned landing spot next to the lighthouse.

"It was perfect. Blue sky, sunny, no clouds, perfect conditions," the Swiss pilot said after touching down in an adjacent field. He said he wanted to show, "it is possible to fly, a little bit, like a bird."

Onlookers scooped up their children, picnics and dogs to race to the landing site as Rossy posed for photographs. His ground crew doused him with champagne, and the pilot swigged greedily from the bottle as he waved to the band of onlookers gathered to cheer him and take pictures with cell phone cameras.

A small airplane zipped across the sky with a banner that read: "Well done Jet Man."

Focus

At 81, Japanese vet makes rare return to Iwo Jima

By JOSEPH COLEMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

IWO JIMA, Japan (AP)—The tunnels of Iwo Jima snake deep beneath the volcanic rock and soil, their entrances camouflaged by a dense tangle of vines and tall grasses.

In their stifling heat, Tsuruji Akikusa suffered months of hunger and thirst. The bodies of dead comrades lay around him. His closest buddy blew himself up with a grenade rather than surrender.

Finally, Akikusa was the only one left alive in his cave.

In May 1945, he says, U.S. troops found him wounded, unconscious and dehydrated. Out of 21,000 Japanese defenders of Iwo Jima, only about 1,000 had survived.

Akikusa, now 81, relived those horrors this month when he stepped foot for the first time since the war on Iwo's black volcanic beaches, flown to the island for a U.S. Army-produced documentary on his life.

"Our commander told us we were going to Hell Island, not Iwo Island," Akikusa recalled, looking out over the waves where the U.S. Marines stormed ashore on Feb. 19, 1945. "We figured this was a place we would never return home from."

Not many did. And today, as old age catches up with the last survivors, only about 20 Iwo Jima vets are still alive in Japan.

Presumed dead by his family, Akikusa came home to find his own funeral in progress. Then he plunged into the hard work and growing prosperity of postwar Japan - became an electrician, married, had a child.

But he never forgot Iwo Jima, and he never forgot his buddy, Yasuo Kumakura. And when Akikusa finally returned 63 years later, he found an island where the terror of the past remains frozen in time.

■ ■ ■

Iwo Jima holds an honored place in the history of World War II in the Pacific, alongside the other titanic clashes of men, machine and weaponry at Guadalcanal and Leyte, Midway and Okinawa.

The desolate eight-square-mile island was the first major battlefield on Japanese territory, a fight of unbridled ferocity between U.S. Marines determined to win at any cost, and dug-in Japanese forces just as determined to fight to the last man.

The bloodletting was unprecedented. Over the course of about five weeks, from Feb. 19 until March 26, some 27,000 men were killed on a spit of semi-denuded land roughly a third of the size of Manhattan.

The Japanese vow to kill 10 Americans for every one Imperial soldier took a lethal toll: Allied forces suffered almost 28,000 casualties, nearly 7,000 of them killed.

Today, the Japanese military keeps a base and airstrip on the islet and considers it a massive open tomb. Visits are tightly restricted. The only access is by U.S. or Japanese military flights.

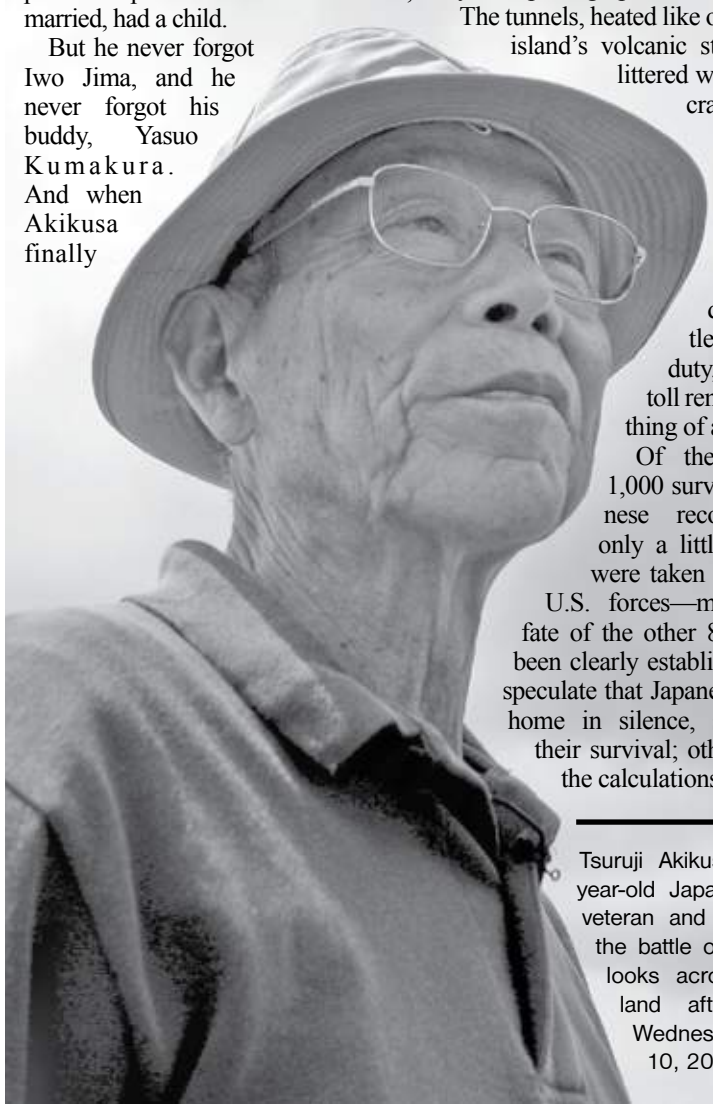
The remains of the 1945 battle are everywhere.

A rusted American tank lies immobilized in the ditch where it fell decades ago, its hatches yawning open. A memorial atop Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima's volcanic peak, marks the spot where the Americans raised the Stars and Stripes—an image immortalized by AP photographer Joe Rosenthal.

The tunnels, heated like ovens by the island's volcanic stirrings, are littered with helmets, cracked sake bottles, gas masks.

For the Japanese, who considered death in battle a supreme duty, the death toll remains something of a puzzle.

Of the estimated 1,000 survivors, Japanese records show only a little over 200 were taken prisoner by U.S. forces—meaning the fate of the other 800 has not been clearly established. Some speculate that Japanese returned home in silence, shamed by their survival; others suspect the calculations are faulty.



Tsuruji Akikusa, an 81-year-old Japanese WWII veteran and survivor of the battle of Iwo Jima, looks across the island after landing Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2008.
AP

AP
Tsuruji Akikusa, an 81-year-old Japanese WWII veteran and survivor of the battle of Iwo Jima, exits a cave Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2008 where he says he lived for three months until his capture by U.S. forces on the island of Iwo To, formally Iwo Jima.

And the island is still the site of a peaceful struggle—over the ownership of its history.

After director Clint Eastwood released his two epic films about the battle in 2006, former residents of the island successfully pushed to restore its prewar name, "Iwo To." It's a minor change, but to some Japanese, it reasserts their sovereignty over a spit of land where so many perished.

■ ■ ■

That Akikusa survived such a hell hole is remarkable enough. But his story—which he detailed in a 2006 book, "Seventeen Years Old at Iwo To"—is a string of extraordinary coincidences and near-misses with death.

His march to Iwo Jima—or "Sulphur Island"—started in November 1942, when he entered the Japanese Imperial Navy Signal School. His studies concluded, he went to war, landing as a signalman on the northern side of Iwo Jima on July 30, 1944. He was just 17.

The expectations on board the boat carrying him to the island were grim. The men knew the Japanese war machine was faltering, and the focus was shifting from domination of Asia to forestalling an Allied assault on the mainland. Lying midway between the Marianas and Tokyo, Iwo Jima was a leading candidate for a U.S. landing.

It didn't take long for Akikusa to find out what that meant on the ground: A U.S. plane strafed his boat on arrival. He dodged the bullets and ran for the hills, wandering alone for a day before finding his post.

The air raids grew more frequent, eventually raging round-the-clock as invasion day approached. Akikusa monitored it all from his post on the plateau on the northern half of the island.

When the Americans finally landed, Akikusa couldn't believe his eyes.

"All along this beach, there were thousands of Marines," he said, gazing out to sea. "Everywhere you looked, for 360 degrees, there were U.S. Navy ships."

From his perch, Akikusa could see a distant U.S. flag atop Mount Suribachi on the southern end of the island.

Here however, his account varies from the standard narrative. According to Akikusa, control of the mountain alternated for several days between the Americans and the Japanese - a battle he monitored by noting the swapping of flags: the U.S. flag one day, the Japanese the next.

At one point, Akikusa says he saw a Japanese flag that appeared to be made of a white shirt, with the rising sun painted with what he speculated was the soldiers' own blood.

"I thought, our guys are really struggling," he said.

Then, in early March, Akikusa was knocked down by a shell fired from offshore. Wounded in his hand and leg - he lost three fingertips - he straggled from tunnel to tunnel for months, sometimes with other soldiers, sometimes alone, living off bugs, rainwater and food pilfered from American supplies.

Later he found a tunnel where, in the hellish, volcano-fueled heat, he sheltered with Kumakura. But as U.S. soldiers approached, his buddy detonated a grenade, choosing death over capture.

After that, Akikusa's recollections fade.

"I didn't eat or drink," he said, "and then I don't remember anything."

■ ■ ■

When he woke up, he was out of the war, a POW in a U.S. military hospital in Guam. Over the next six months, he was shuttled among various camps in Hawaii and then Washington state, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Meanwhile, his hometown mourned his death.

In the confusion of the war's end, the Japanese military bureaucracy assumed that everyone on Iwo Jima had died, and sent what remains they could find to the bereaved families.

So while Akikusa recuperated in the U.S., his hometown in central Japan prepared his funeral. His parents refused to participate: a fortuneteller had told them their son was alive.

Still, his family was aghast when in January 1946, Akikusa appeared at the front door—while his funeral was taking place with those of a host of fallen soldiers at the local elementary school.

"They were speechless," he remembers. "Then they sent me to my own funeral, and I had to take my name down from among the dead."

Today he owns a company that fixes equipment at schools and businesses, and has often dreamed of returning to Iwo Jima to pay his respects.

His book paved the way. His writings caught the attention of the U.S. military, which flew him to Iwo Jima on an Army jet for a day of filming. (The documentary is for in-house purposes and there are no plans to make it public.)

Akikusa approached his confrontation in the calm, studied manner of a tourist. He napped during the flight, then filmed through the window as the plane landed.

Once on the tarmac, he held forth on the changes in vegetation—more lush now than in 1945—and the weather, less hot than what he remembered as a 17-year-old.

But it was clear he had an overriding goal: to find his final cave and bid a proper farewell to Kumakura. Ferried around the island on a Japanese military minibus, he toured several caves, without success.

Then the bus stopped at one last possibility: a tiny, overgrown hillock near a runway. Akikusa got out and peered through the foliage at the opening of the tunnel, asked his guide questions about the location.

Then he lost his breath.

"Oh, this is it! It's the north entrance," he gasped, choking back tears as he pointed into the leaf-shrouded darkness. "Kumakura's in there, Kumakura's in there!"

He looked up at a fellow visitor.

"I was the last one," he said.

He pressed his hands together and murmured a prayer for his lost friend—then he pushed his fit and nimble body through the foliage and crouched in the hole, disappearing for a few seconds in the darkness where he and Kumakura endured hell.

Later, as the plane flew him back to Tokyo, he mused about having greeted Kumakura's spirit.

"I'm happy we got to meet again," he said. "I told him: 'Now we have peace.'"

Life & Style

Keira Knightley as "Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire" stars in *The Duchess*, a Paramount Vantage release.

Knightley takes on role as fashion chameleon

By MONICA CORCORAN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

"What does it feel like to wear a corset?" asks Keira Knightley, looking amused. The actress rolls her molasses-brown eyes and starts to gasp as though she's choking on a fish bone. "Your ribs are crushed in and you can't get your breath. Oh, and if you get emotional, you just can't calm down at all," she says as her chest heaves. She takes a deep breath and adds: "You can certainly understand why women were known as the weaker sex."

Not that she's complaining, mind you. Knightley has come to understand how certain clothes make her a stronger actress. She appreciates the emotional strain of a mercilessly cinched waist and wig that towers 2 feet high. Or the physical discomfort of a 1930s bathing cap and a flannel swimsuit. What Knightley endures on-screen isn't really all that different from the pain that comes with a new pair of 5-inch Christian Louboutin pumps. She just happens to get paid well for her suffering.

"For me, fashion is all about fantasy and creating characters," she says, echoing the aspirational allure of every Miu Miu or Gucci ad. "It's amazing to work with a costume designer to build someone from the ground up. You start with the socks."

Or the silk stockings. At 23, Knightley has time-traveled her way through decades and decades of costume dramas. Her major period films include "King Arthur," "Atonement," "Silk" and three rollicking "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies. She was nominated for an Oscar as the hand-me-down-clad Elizabeth Bennet in "Pride & Prejudice." Her latest film—"The Duchess," which opened Friday—has her gallivanting around the English countryside in monstrous chapeaus that could house a family of field mice. Think "Sex and the City," three centuries ago.

The film chronicles the tragic, scandal-seared life of aristocrat Georgiana Spencer Cavendish, who married a distant duke with a wandering eye. His neglect and betrayal drove the duchess to crave more and more public attention. "As her confidence grows, her wigs get higher and her corsets get tighter," Knightley says. "She's trying to say 'I am fine' through her costumes, which I find intriguing."

Cavendish's outrageous looks—hats festooned with foxtails, ostrich-feather headdresses—also sparked fashion fads. "The duchess was the first to start 'pregnancy fashion' by wearing that maternity gown with the crystals when she goes into labor," says costume designer Michael O'Connor, who fashioned 27 looks for the film. "She set all these trends and then wouldn't be seen in them again."

The same could be said of the woman who plays her, this sylph with cheekbones that could shave ice. No matter how dated the looks, Knightley's distinctive on-screen styles always manage to affect street fashion. Her knee-high boots and flouncy blouses in the Disney swashbucklers had fashion editors purring about "pirate chic." The laser-cut green dress she wore in "Atonement" last year heralded a return to retro glamour on the red carpet. Even the taut abs she showed off in her 2002 breakout role in "Bend It Like Beckham" drove women to drop and do crunches.

"Pirate chic?" says Knightley, her eyebrows at an astonished half-mast. "No, really?"

Clearly, the London native is tickled and repelled by her influence. "Please don't ask me about my style," pleads Knightley, who has never perched in the front row of a fashion show. Ironically, you won't catch this month's Vogue cover girl paging through a fashion magazine either. "I don't think anyone should dictate to you what you should like or wear because it's trendy," she says. Her own style icons are sartorial surrealists such as Bjork and Helena Bonham Carter, ladies who consistently get called out by the fashion police. "They are completely out there, which I love. You have to be brave to express yourself."

Or else find a character that will do the trick. Just moments before, Knightley had catapulted into a hotel room in New York for this interview and to be photographed. She eyed the array of casual looks—lots of denim, a few dresses and a leather jacket—laid out on the bed for her cover shoot and then asked: "OK. Who do you want me to be?" In the end, she didn't want to wear "those L.A. skinny jeans" and opted for baggy Diesel denim and a striped navy Miss Davenporte knit sweater. She suddenly looked like one of Jean-Luc Godard's gamin leads. "I feel like being French today," she said and barely glanced at her reflection before posing for the camera, then changing again.

Still, it would seem that her nonchalant attitude about her image—she has been known to describe her look as "disheveled"—is as deliberate as another starlet's practiced pout. Knightley's reticence to cleave to a certain look makes her all the more malleable on-screen and off. Last year, fronting for the design house of Chanel, Knightley posed wearing just a bowler in ads for the scent Coco Mademoiselle.

"People thought it was shocking because I was naked," she says. "I thought it was wonderful and bold, like Coco Chanel."

Nudity works for Knightley because she's forever a visual tabula rasa—ever ready to don a bustle or a flapper's sheath. Plus, she's obviously no fashion misfit. Knightley tops every best-dressed list and often minces down the red carpet in flawless Chanel couture, Valentino, and bold statement jewelry. No elitist, she also has been spotted in dresses and blouses by Topshop. She dresses the part, all right. She just refuses to keep playing the same role.

"It's just amazing to me that you can define yourself by what you wear," Knightley muses. "But I guess that idea of designing the person you want to be goes back to 'The Duchess.'"

She wiggles her bare toes and frowns. "I would never want to say that this or that is my definite style, because I never know who I want to be. What if I wanted to be someone different the next day? Then what?"

Actress Keira Knightley from the film "The Duchess," poses for a portrait during the International Film Festival in Toronto, Sunday, Sept. 7, 2008.

AP

AP

Members of the media watch the debate in the filing center at the presidential debate at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Miss., Friday Sept. 26, 2008.

Furious spinning on TV after presidential debate

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—It was hard to tell if there were more disagreements voiced during the presidential debate between John McCain and Barack Obama or after it on television.

The networks' pundits moved quickly Friday to put into perspective a debate seen by tens of millions of Americans, although a clear winner didn't emerge. It was a reflection of cautiousness, the closeness of the race and the influence of furious spinning by both campaigns.

"There was no knockout, and maybe no knockdown, but McCain was on the offensive throughout," commentator William Kristol said on Fox News Channel.

His fellow panelist, Juan Williams, quickly retorted, "I thought Barack Obama put John McCain on the defensive all night."

David Gergen, CNN analyst, said, "McCain needed a clear victory tonight and I think that eluded him."

Said Fox's Chris Wallace, "I think the McCain campaign is very happy tonight."

And they weren't even the professional spinners, who try to buttonhole reporters backstage with opinions about as predictable as the sun rising every morning. It has become a cliche of debate nights, a room television networks know they should avoid but can't seem to help themselves.

Another useless TV trick: those meters that can be twisted up or down to show how a voter is responding to a particular passage. Mostly, they looked indecipherable.

Obama's campaign put forward vice presidential candidate Joe Biden for post-debate interviews, and he appeared on all the news networks. His Republican counterpart, Sarah Palin, was nowhere in sight.

Several commentators noted how Obama said at a number of points that McCain was right about something, which could either be construed as a sign of weakness or one in which he was willing to lead in a bipartisan manner. McCain pounded home the point that there were several things his opponent didn't understand about the world.

"McCain very often seemed like he was condescending, seeming like he was lecturing Barack Obama," CNN's Gloria Borger said.

The first debate, which was supposed to be centered on foreign policy, concerned the economy for about 40 minutes. Moderator Jim Lehrer of PBC kept his questions simple to get the men talking. He even tried to push the candidates to address each other instead of the camera, a request that had some success as more heated foreign policy exchanges came.

Snapshot polls by both CNN and CBS News showed Obama with a clear advantage among voters in how people perceived the debate performance. CBS monitored a roomful of uncommitted voters and when asked who won the debate shortly after it was done, the number of people who raised their hands for Obama was more than double than those for McCain.

Consensus for either side will undoubtedly harden as the debate quickly gets reduced to sound bites and Youtube clips.

"Is the race now different than it was at 9 p.m. eastern time?" asked ABC commentator George Will. "The answer I think is no. This wasn't a game changer. Both had their familiar personas. Barack Obama was the rather tweedy professor conducting a national seminar. John McCain was a rather hotter personality, the national scold."

Pundits didn't need a calendar to start anticipating the next debate, between Biden and Palin. It's scheduled for Oct. 2.

Television networks will find out in a few days whether the McCain-Obama debate could claim the ultimate record of most-watched presidential debate ever.

The standard was set in 1980, when 80.6 million people watched that campaign's only debate between President Jimmy Carter and Republican challenger Ronald Reagan. TV audiences that big typically gather only once a year, for the Super Bowl.

The most-watched debate since 1980 was the second of three between the first President Bush, Bill Clinton and Ross Perot in 1992, seen by just under 70 million people. The first debate in 2004 between President Bush and John Kerry was seen by 62.5 million, Nielsen Media Research said.

Shoes make news as models rise and fall in Milan

MILAN, Italy (AP)—Shoes are contemporary jewelry, designer Donatella Versace once said, and in recent years they have become an integral part of a designer's fashion statement.

Armani one season ennobled the running shoe by pairing it with chiffon evening wear. In the 1990s the stiletto became a symbol for racy chic. More recently, prewar platforms and wedges thought to have been relegated to the back of grandma's closet became super hot again, especially with teenagers.

The heels have become taller with each season, and the inches are apparently taking their toll. Models at this week's preview shows in Milan tripped, slipped and—in the case of one model wearing ankle-strapped high-heels at Prada—toppled over.

On the fourth day of Milan Fashion Week, there were shoe troubles for both Pucci and Dolce & Gabbana. The sensible footwear from Fendi, however, kept those models firm on the ground.

PUCCI

The Pucci silk prints were breathtaking, tending for daytime to be in monochrome or featuring abstract palm leaf prints. For evening, Pucci created prints out of a myriad of stitched-together crystal beads on a gold background.

AP

A model wears a creation part of the Dolce & Gabbana women's Spring/Summer 2009 fashion collection presented in Milan, Italy, Thursday, Sept. 25, 2008.

Gold also made up the high-heel of Pucci's summer bootie. But apparently extra height makes the shoe as treacherous as it is gorgeous. Despite being trained to be steady on her feet, the same model stumbled three times, somehow managing not to fall.

DOLCE & GABBANA

They might have chosen slippers to go with their pajama party, but the Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana duo accessorized their luxurious silk outfits with sparkling and soaring platform sandals. The super-high platforms were also used for their dreamy ball gowns in tulle and embroidered roses. Dolce defended the towering look, saying that every girl has the right to dream.

But if several of the trained models stumbled on the slippery runway during the show, how can one expect a debutante to negotiate the ballroom floor?

FENDI

The Fendi show featured models wearing wild pinned-up hairstyles and futuristic lace dresses cinched at the waist by a cummerbund. The look may have been offbeat, but the overall effect was still the elegant and easygoing look preferred by Italian designers for the summer 2009.

The footwear at Fendi was strangely calm, though, especially for the house that made metal ankle straps a fashion fetish. The high heels were never towering, and favored was an open-toed saddle shoe fitted with a comfortable wedge.

2008 National Book Festival is launched with laughter

WASHINGTON (AP)—Children's book author Jon Scieszka enlightened a National Book Festival audience Friday night with stories about how he learned to read funny books by Dr. Seuss and strange books at school about an "alien" family.

"There was a boy, two girls, a mom and a dad and they talked in the weirdest way," Scieszka said at a gala kicking off this year's book festival, an annual event started by first lady Laura Bush in 2001. "Instead of saying `Hey, look at that dog,' they would say `Look. Look. See the dog. That is a dog."

Scieszka, who grew up in Flint, Mich., and now lives in Brooklyn, N.Y., and other authors entertained President Bush and Mrs. Bush, dignitaries and book lovers at a fancy gathering at the Library of Congress held on the eve of Saturday's book festival on the National Mall.

He said he became convinced that the "alien" characters were afraid they were going to forget each other's names because they kept repeating them.

"So if Jane didn't see the dog," he said. "Dick would say `Look, Jane, look. There is the dog next to Sally, Jane. ... The dog is next to father, Jane. Ha. Ha. Ha.'"

At home, Scieszka said his mother read him stories that made sense—tales about a guy named Sam, who liked green eggs and ham, and one about blue dogs, yellow dogs and dogs that drove cars and had a giant party in a tree.

"Those are my kind of dogs," he said.

More than 70 authors, illustrators, poets and thousands of book lovers of all ages are expected to attend this year's event.

"Many, of whom are here tonight, will tell the stories behind the books we love and introduce readers to new favorites," said Mrs. Bush who was honored at the gala for creating the festival. Mrs. Bush and her daughter, Jenna, will present their children's book "Read All About It!" and sign copies at the children's pavilion at the festival.

'DJ AM released from burn hospital'

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Celebrity disc jockey DJ AM has been released from a Georgia hospital after suffering severe burns in a fiery plane crash a week ago, a spokeswoman for the musician said Friday.

"While he is deeply saddened by the events he is thankful for all of the love and support he has been receiving from fans and friends," spokeswoman Jenni Weinman said in a statement.

DJ AM, whose real name is Adam Goldstein, and former Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker, were rushed to a burn hospital in Augusta, Ga., after their Learjet crashed on takeoff from a Columbia airport. Doctors have said they expect both men to fully recover.

Two pilots and two other passengers who were close friends of the musicians were killed in the crash just before midnight Sept. 19.

An officer who was among the first on the scene said the musicians told him they escaped the flaming wreckage by sliding down a wing.

A hospital spokeswoman would not say when Barker was expected to be released. The head of the burn hospital said it can take up to one year to heal from the second- and third-degree burns the men suffered. But Dr. Fred Mullins said he didn't expect it to take that long for the musicians to heal.

The Learjet shot off the end of the runway, ripped through a fence and crossed a highway before coming to rest. Officials with the National Transportation Safety Board have not said what caused the crash, but spokesman Peter Knudson said he expects the agency to release a preliminary report next week.

NTSB officials have said a cockpit voice recorder revealed that crew members thought a tire blew and tried to abort the takeoff. Investigators recovered pieces of tire from the runway.

Barker was one of the more colorful members of the multiplatinum-selling punk rock band Blink-182. DJ AM is a popular disc jockey who was also a tabloid favorite for some celebrity romances.

AP

In this Oct. 5, 2008 file photo, Adam Goldstein, who goes by DJ AM, arrives at Nicky Hilton's 25th birthday party at LAX nightclub inside the Luxor hotel & casino in Las Vegas.

Dave Matthews helped produce new Palahniuk film

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dave Matthews has acted in a few films, but the Grammy-winning musician has been playing a behind-the-scenes role in Hollywood of late - that of film producer.

The singer of his namesake band co-founded ATO Pictures and has served mostly as a silent partner. But in the company's latest film, "Choke," the musician was adamant that ATO do more than help finance the film.

"I felt very strongly about us being connected to the project. ... I loved the script," Matthews told The Associated Press during a phone interview Friday before performing with his band in the Brazilian city of Manaus.

"Choke," which was released Friday by Fox Searchlight Pictures, is an adaptation of a novel from "Fight Club" author Chuck Palahniuk.

AP

Dave Matthews performs during Farm Aid 2008, Saturday, Sept. 20, 2008 in Mansfield, Mass.

The film, which stars Sam Rockwell, is about a sex addict named Victor Mancini who likes to pretend he's choking in restaurants to garner strangers' sympathy and then fleece them. When Mancini isn't doing that, hooking up with fellow sex addicts or working at a historical theme park, he's trying to cajole the truth of his paternity from his mentally ill mother.

Matthews doesn't appear in the film, but he championed it once he read the script and the book.

"What Chuck manages to do is make an unusual story not unusual, and I think the film makes that (as well)," Matthews said. "There's a very sweet story at the core of it: This young man's struggle to find out who he is."

Last year, ATO produced "Joshua," a film about a musical child whose family life dramatically alters once his baby sister is born.

Matthews wrote the song that the child character croons as the film draws to a close.

For "Choke," Matthews worked on planning and supporting the movie.

"My involvement was much more in discussing how to get the film done ... (being) really more of a cheerleader," he said.

The opening of "Choke" comes as Matthews and his bandmates work to wrap a tour only weeks after the untimely death of LeRoi Moore, the band's saxophonist and arranger, and one of its founding members.

Moore died Aug. 19 in Los Angeles of complications stemming from a June 30 accident near Charlottesville involving an all-terrain vehicle. He was 46.

"I think it will be a long time before we'll go through a night without him being very present on stage with us when we're performing, in both happy and sad ways, I suppose," Matthews said.

Busta Rhymes wins right to play in UK concert

LONDON (AP)—American rapper Busta Rhymes won a court order Friday allowing him to perform at a charity concert in Britain, despite a government attempt to keep him out of the country.

High Court Justice Nicholas Stadlen ruled that Rhymes - whose real name is Trevor George Smith Jr. - could play at London's Royal Albert Hall. The judge said he did not want to interfere with the concert, which is being given for volunteers who earned their tickets by doing four hours of community service.

"What weighs in the balance is not just what effect that would have on Mr. Smith, to which I pay considerably less regard than the effect on the 4,000 volunteers who would be disappointed if he didn't perform this evening," Stadlen said.

Immigration officials stopped Rhymes on Thursday at London City Airport, with his promoters saying they cited previous legal trouble in the United States.

In March a New York judge sentenced Rhymes to three years' probation for assaulting his former driver and a fan.

In Britain, authorities initially detained him in an effort to put him on a flight back to Amsterdam, Netherlands, but the High Court ordered his release Thursday and put out an injunction preventing his removal from Britain.

Stadlen's decision to extend the injunction should allow Rhymes to perform. Orange RockCorps, which organized the concert, said Thursday it had booked Ludacris as a replacement act, but it was not immediately clear whether he, Rhymes, or both would end up playing.

Known for eye-catching outfits and an antic performance style, Rhymes has hits that include, "Put Your Hands Where My Eyes Could See," "Dangerous" and "Touch It." He also has appeared in movies, including "Shaft" and "Finding Forrester."

AP

Dave Matthews performs during Farm Aid 2008, Saturday, Sept. 20, 2008 in Mansfield, Mass.

Court says no punitive damages in 'LOTR' suit

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge has barred the estate of "Lord of the Rings" author J.R.R. Tolkien from seeking punitive damages against the studio that brought the trilogy to the big screen.

Tolkien's heirs claim New Line Cinema has failed to pay any royalties from the estimated $6 billion they say the movie has grossed worldwide. The lawsuit is seeking more than $150 million in compensatory damages based on breach of contract, fraud and other claims.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ann I. Jones also ruled this week that the estate and Tolkien heirs have established a legal basis for the fraud claim against New Line.

As part of that allegation, the lawsuit claims New Line sent millions of dollars to Time Warner Inc.'s AOL, improperly claiming they were for advertising expenses. The lawsuit also claims the studio built production offices and facilities in New Zealand and listed them as expenses for the "Lord of the Rings" films, although the heirs claim they are now being used for other New Line projects.

New Line's attorneys successfully argued that Tolkien's heirs had to demonstrate a "public wrong" under New York law - which governs the contracts - to claim punitive damages if they win at trial. Jones ruled that the heirs' grievance "is clearly seeking to vindicate private wrongs."

Tolkien signed agreements in 1969 with United Artists governing the movie rights to the "Lord of the Rings" books as well as "The Hobbit."

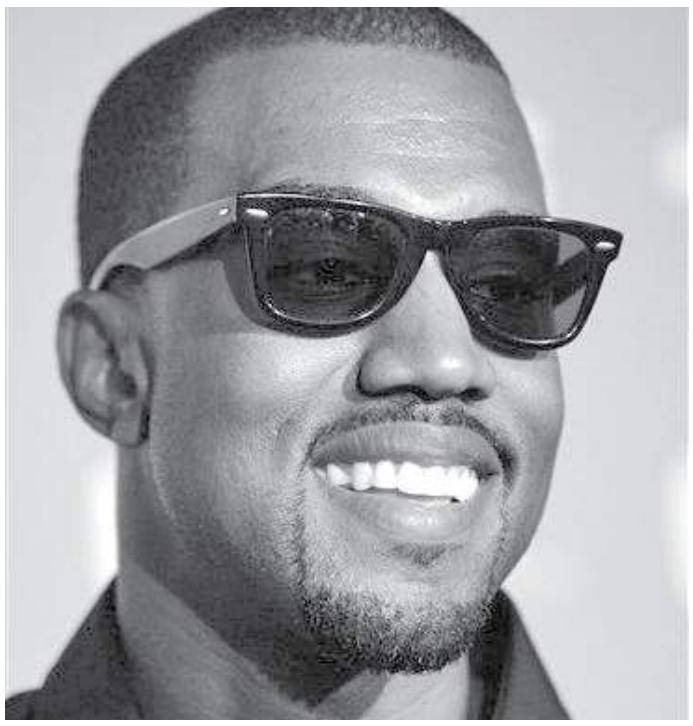
After the author's death, his heirs created The Tolkien Trust, a British charity.

The charity's trustees, which include Tolkien's heirs, joined publisher HarperCollins to sue the studio in February. Besides damages, the lawsuit seeks a court order that would terminate New Line's rights to make a two-film prequel based on "The Hobbit."

Guillermo del Toro has signed on to direct that film and its sequel in New Zealand alongside executive producer Peter Jackson.

Attorneys for New Line and The Tolkien Trust did not immediately return calls seeking comment on Thursday.

West won't face charge in airport scuffle



In this Sept. 26, 2007 file photo, rapper Kanye West arrives at the "Us Weekly Hot Hollywood 2007" party in Los Angeles.

AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles County prosecutors say they have decided not to file felony charges against Kanye West and his manager over an incident in which a paparazzo's camera was broken.

Los Angeles County District Attorney's spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons says prosecutors referred the case to city attorneys, who will decide whether to charge West with a misdemeanor.

West was arrested Sept. 11 at Los Angeles International Airport on suspicion of felony vandalism after he was captured on video struggling with a paparazzo and breaking a flash on the floor.

City Attorney spokesman Frank Mateljan says a decision on a lesser charge isn't expected until next week.

West's road manager was also arrested on suspicion he broke the photographer's camera and one belonging to a TMZ videographer.

LA County prosecutors did not cite a specific reason for not filing felony charges against the pair.

West rocketed to stardom in 2004 with his album "The College Dropout" and has enjoyed wide commercial appeal for his follow-ups "Late Registration" and "Graduation."

'Project Runway' in LA stalled by NY court ruling

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The reality fashion show "Project Runway" will not be able to strut its stuff on the Lifetime TV channel, a judge ruled Friday.

A preliminary injunction was ordered by New York Supreme Court Justice Richard B. Lowe in a lawsuit filed by NBC Universal against the Weinstein Co., which produces the hit reality series hosted by supermodel Heidi Klum.

NBC Universal had aired the series on its Bravo channel. It sued Weinstein after the production company made a reported $150 million deal with Lifetime for the show.

The temporary injunction bars Weinstein from taking "Project Runway" or any spinoff to Lifetime and contended that evidence showed that Weinstein violated NBC's "right of first refusal" for the show.

Weinstein Co. said in a statement that it intended to appeal the decision, which was applauded by NBC Universal.

Lifetime said it was disappointed with the ruling and that it will "pursue all measures" to uphold its agreement with Weinstein for the show's sixth season.

Also part of the judge's ruling, Lifetime and Weinstein cannot promote, market or air "Project Runway."

NBC was ordered to put up a $20 million bond; Weinstein had asked the court to set a $200 million bond, which it said was the value of its deal with Lifetime.

In its lawsuit, NBC alleged that Weinstein moved "Project Runway" because NBC balked at the attempt to bundle the series with other Weinstein properties that NBC wasn't interested in.

Weinstein said that there was no right of first refusal in the contract and that NBC Universal was offered the deal and was outbid.

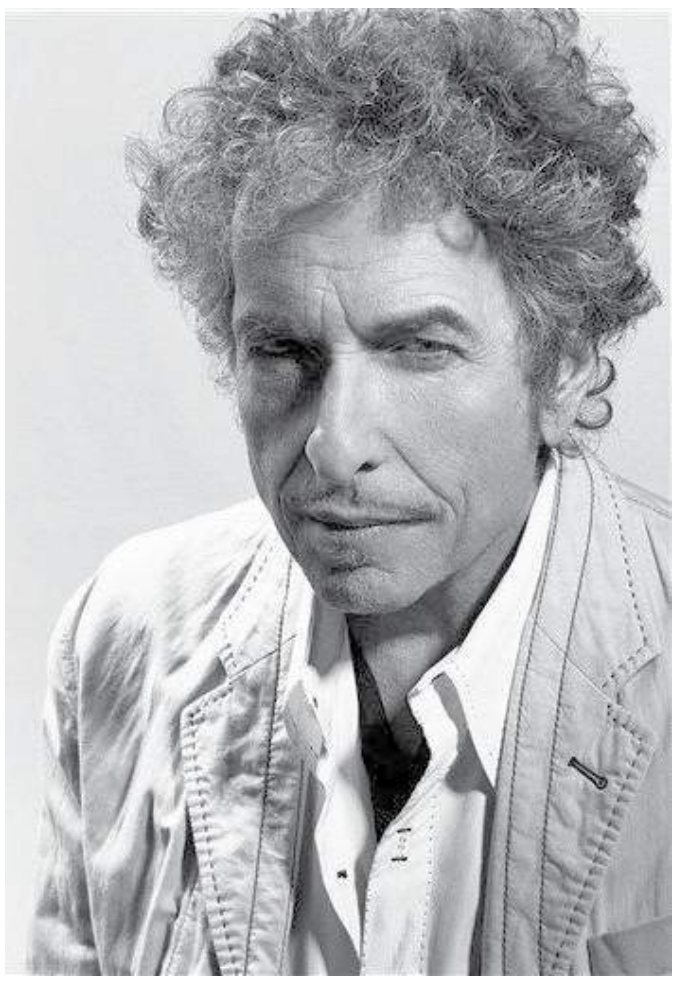
New Dylan album to stream on NPR for 1 week

NEW YORK (AP)—Bob Dylan's new album shall be released one week early as a free online stream on National Public Radio's Web site.

NPR Music will stream the entire two-CD, "Tell Tale Signs," beginning at 12:01 a.m. EDT Tuesday. It will be available for listening at least until Oct. 7, when the album is officially released by Columbia Records.

"Tell Tale Signs" is the eighth volume of Dylan's ongoing rarities compilations, titled the "Bootleg Series." This edition includes out-takes and rare cuts from the last two decades. An alternate version of "Mississippi"—a song from 2001's "Love and Theft"—was earlier made available as a free download at Amazon.com.

The early album stream is a first for NPR Music, which often provides live concerts for free as podcasts.



In this undated file photo originally provided by Sony BMG, shows musician Bob Dylan.

AP

Navaira out of hospital after traffic accident

AP

In this Sept. 3, 2003 file photo, Emilio Navaira arrives at the Latin Grammy Awards in Miami.

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Grammy-winning Tejano singer Emilio Navaira, still recovering from injuries suffered in a bus wreck six months ago, has been discharged from a hospital after another traffic accident.

A University Hospital spokeswoman said Navaira and his wife, Maria, were discharged late Thursday, a day after their car collided with a truck.

Navaira has been undergoing rehabilitation since wrecking his tour bus in suburban Houston in March. His agent, Joe Casias, did not return a call Friday from The Associated Press for comment.

Casias told the San Antonio Express-News that Navaira suffered no bone fractures but doctors "are watching him very closely."

He said the couple were on the way back from rehabilitation at the time of the wreck. The 46-year-old singer had been taking his rehab sessions in Houston until Hurricane Ike caused the couple to return home to San Antonio recently.

After the Houston accident, doctors performed two brain surgeries and repaired an aneurysm in the performer's right lung. His doctors had been encouraged by his quick recovery but have said it is difficult to determine whether he will recover fully.

Known to his fans simply as Emilio, the singer has released more than a dozen albums with his band. He won a Grammy for best Tejano album in 2003 with "Acuerdate."

Husband consumed by regret after death of beloved wife

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I recently lost my wife to a long illness. When she could no longer work, I tried to give her the best quality of life I could. It took a toll. I worked long hours to give her everything she needed. The medical bills were astronomical. All she ever wanted was me.

I was always the macho type, and "I love you" was always hard for me to say. (I'm a real tough guy.) Well, this tough guy would give anything for one more chance to say it.

She died so suddenly, it was like it wasn't real. For the first couple of weeks I threw myself into work and thought I could handle it. When the death certificate arrived in the mail, that's when I fell apart.

I feel guilty because I was gone so much. I miss her terribly. Sometimes the loneliness is so bad it feels like someone is standing on my chest.

Abby, I would like to remind all the other macho guys out there that TIME is something you only get so much of. It is precious, but unfortunately, limited. I realized, too late, that it's not enough that my wife "knew" I loved her. I should have told her more often. I know now that "I wish I would have," "I know I should have," and "If I had just one more chance" are the worst things in the world to hear yourself say when it is already too late.

PLEASE tell your spouse you love her or him. You never know if the last time you say it might be the last time you get the chance.

TOO LATE IN TENNESSEE

DEAR TOO LATE: Please accept my deepest sympathy for the death of your wife. Your letter makes clear the depth of the loss you are feeling. Although true lovers never get enough of each other, I am sure she understood the strain you were under and that you loved her.

Readers, this gentleman's letter carries with it an important message. "I love you" is the sweetest music a person can hear. Bouquets of flowers smell the sweetest when they are in the hands of the recipient, not stacked by her (or his) casket. And praise is most appreciated when it can be heard by the person who has earned it, not when it's recited in a eulogy after he or she has passed. So speak up now, before it truly is too late.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am the oldest of three sisters. The youngest has always been the overachiever. She graduated from high school and college early, was the first to be married, and she's having the first baby in the family.

I have demonstrated my pride in my sister by attending all her celebrations. I have sent gifts, helped to organize not only parties, but also her wedding and baby showers.

I recently announced to my mother and middle sister that I am planning to be married, assuming we would all share the excitement we did for my sister. Not only did they show a complete lack of interest in my milestone, they immediately changed the subject to my sister's baby shower. I cannot help but feel hurt by this. Is the first milestone in a family more celebrated than the others that follow?

COMING IN SECOND IN ATLANTA

DEAR SECOND: I don't blame you for feeling slighted. It appears your sister is the "golden child" in your family. Because your mother and sibling appear hypnotized by the glare of her spotlight, you may have to find your validation outside your immediate family—from friends and your fiance's family. I recommend you start now.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

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235- NEWS

Rays clinch AL East title after Red Sox loss

AP

Tampa Bay Rays pitcher Andy Sonnanstine throws during the first inning of a Major League Baseball game against the Detroit Tigers in Detroit, Friday, Sept. 26, 2008.

DETROIT (AP)—The wait is over.

The Tampa Bay Rays won their first AL East title late Friday night when the Boston Red Sox lost to the New York Yankees, 8-19. The Rays lost 6-4 to the Detroit Tigers earlier and had to sit through the rain-delayed Boston loss before celebrating their championship.

Manager Joe Maddon and a few of the players remained in the clubhouse at Comerica Park to watch the Red Sox game. Others watched it at Detroit's MGM Grand and back at the team hotel.

Tampa Bay, which had never won more than 70 games in a season, became the first team other than Boston and New York to win the division since Baltimore did it in 1997.

The Rays waited into the night to see what would happen in a rain-interrupted game in Boston that could give Tampa Bay the AL East crown despite a second straight loss.

Gary Sheffield hit two home runs and Ramon Santiago also went deep to lift the Detroit Tigers to a 6-4 win over the Rays on Friday night.

"We were definitely disappointed, it would have been nice to win it on the field," said Carlos Pena. "We'll see what happens."

Sheffield, who returned from a four-game suspension for fighting with Cleveland pitcher Fausto Carmona, has 499 career home runs.

"It wasn't something I thought about," Sheffield said about the 500-home run milestone.

Santiago homered for the third time in two days.

Magglio Ordonez drove in two runs for Detroit, which beat Tampa Bay 7-5 on Thursday.

B.J. Upton homered and drove in two runs for the Rays.

Justin Verlander (11-17) won his first game since Aug. 22. He allowed two runs and five hits in five innings, walking three and striking out eight.

"I couldn't command my fastball," Verlander said.

Fernando Rodney pitched the ninth for his 12th save in 18 chances. He allowed a run on first baseman Miguel Cabrera's error, but escaped a second and third, two-out jam by getting Jason Bartlett to fly out.

Andy Sonnanstine (13-9) gave up five runs on five hits in 5 2-3 innings for the Rays, walking five and striking out seven.

"A little erratic at the start," she said. "And by the time I got things straightened out, it was to late."

Detroit won despite losing Placido Polanco in the first inning, when the second baseman slid into home and sprained his left ankle.

He rolled over and writhed in pain after sliding across the plate and beating the tag by catcher Dioner Navarro. X-rays were negative and Polanco, hitting .307 with eight home runs and 58 RBI, was scheduled to be re-evaluated Saturday.

Royals 8, Twins 1

In Minneapolis, a night after erasing a five-run deficit against the White Sox to reclaim first place in the AL Central, the Twins fell flat in an loss to the surging Royals.

Kansas City hammered Francisco Liriano (6-4) for six runs and 11 hits in 4 1-3 innings.

Kyle Davies (9-7) allowed one run and four hits in six innings and tied a career high with eight strikeouts, helping the Royals win for the 12th time in 14 games. They've won seven straight on the road.

The Twins came into Friday with a half-game lead on the White Sox. Minnesota is seeking its fifth division title in seven seasons.

Billy Butler had three hits and a homer and Mike Aviles added a double and a homer for the Royals, who are looking to crash another party in the final series of a season.

Indians 11, White Sox 8

In Chicago, Ryan Garko and Cleveland kept struggling Chicago in second place.

Garko homered twice, including a grand slam in a six-run fifth inning, and had five RBIs to help the Indians send the White Sox to their fourth straight loss.

Chicago missed a chance to move back into first in the AL Central when Minnesota lost at home to Kansas City, 8-1. Instead, they remained a half game behind Minnesota after a shaky pitching effort that included six walks—one with the bases loaded—and a wild pitch that also scored a run.

The White Sox have two games left against the Indians and possibly a makeup game Monday against Detroit, if needed.

Cleveland lefty Scott Lewis (4-0) served up homers to Jermaine Dye, Paul Konerko and A.J. Pierzynski during his five innings but got the victory.

John Danks (11-9) allowed seven runs and seven hits in four innings.

Blue Jays 3, Orioles 0, 7 innings

In Baltimore, Scott Richmond pitched six innings of four-hit ball to earn his first major league victory and Toronto handed Baltimore its 10th straight loss, winning in a game halted by rain in the seventh.

Curtis Thigpen hit his first big league homer in the seventh, minutes before rain forced a stoppage in play. After a delay of 1 hour, 5 minutes, umpires called the game.

Richmond (1-3) struck out three and walked none. Richmond outpitched rookie Chris Waters (3-5), who allowed three runs and nine hits in six-plus innings.

The 10-game skid is the Orioles' longest since they lost 12 in a row in August 2004.

Phillies 8, Nationals 4

In Philadelphia, Ryan Howard hit his major league-leading 48th homer, Joe Blanton pitched six effective innings and the Philadelphia Phillies moved closer to clinching the NL East title with an 8-4 victory over the Washington Nationals on Friday night.

The Phillies' magic number for winning their second straight division championship was reduced to one after the New York Mets lost 6-1 to the Florida Marlins.

Chase Utley had a three-run double and Howard drove in four runs as Philadelphia built a 7-1 lead off Collin Balester (3-7).

The Nationals chipped away against Blanton (4-0), but four relievers combined to toss three scoreless innings.

The Phillies reached 90 wins for the 12th time in the franchise's 126-year history. They hadn't done it since winning 97 games in 1993.

Marlins 6, Mets 1

In New York, the Mets' offense fizzled and Mike Pelfrey lost to Florida for the fourth time this season, putting New York's postseason chances in peril.

Josh Willingham homered and Hanley Ramirez had four hits for the Marlins, who knocked New York out of the playoff race on the final weekend last season.

The Mets fell two games behind first-place Philadelphia, which beat Washington 8-4. They will send ace Johan Santana to the mound Saturday on three days' rest. New York also fell a game behind Milwaukee in the wild-card race.

Pelfrey (13-11) allowed three runs and eight hits in six innings, falling to 0-4 in five starts against Florida this year.

Chris Volstad (6-4) yielded just an unearned run in six innings for Florida. Ramirez scored three times and stole two bases.

Brewers 5, Cubs 1

In Milwaukee, Rickie Weeks hit a three-run homer, Seth McClung pitched four scoreless innings in relief and the Brewers rallied to beat the Cubs for their fifth straight win and the lead in the NL wild-card race.

Weeks, who has been relegated to a bench role but replaced Ray Durham after the sixth, drove reliever Chad Gaudin's pitch deep to left field, flipping his bat as his shot cleared the wall to score McClung and Mike Cameron.

The win eliminated the Astros even though Houston beat Atlanta.

With the game tied at 1 in the sixth, Cubs reliever Sean Marshall (3-5) allowed a leadoff double to Durham and walked Ryan Braun before striking out Prince Fielder. Jeff Samardzija came in and got J.J. Hardy to pop up for the second out, but Corey Hart flared a go-ahead RBI single to left.

Brewers starter Jeff Suppan allowed eight hits and a walk over five innings. McClung (6-6) did the rest, striking out six and retiring 10 of the final 11 Cubs.

Astros 5, Braves 4

In Houston, Pinch-hitter Darin Erstad hit a game-ending home run in the ninth inning to lift Houston to a win over Atlanta, but the Astros were still eliminated from playoff contention.

Houston entered 3 1/2 games back of the New York Mets and Milwaukee in the NL wild-card chase and were eliminated when the Brewers beat the Cubs.

Erstad's third career game-winning homer bailed out closer Jose Valverde (6-3), who gave up the tying run in the top of the ninth. Julian Tavarez (1-4) retired Humberto Quintero in the bottom half before Erstad homered to right on the first pitch he saw.

Michael Bourn had three hits and Ty Wigginton homered for Houston.

Josh Anderson had three hits for Atlanta.

Cardinals 7, Reds 6

In St. Louis, Troy Glaus drove in the winning run with a bases-loaded sacrifice fly in the ninth inning and Albert Pujols homered and had three hits to run his streak to seven straight hits over three games.

Javier Valentin's sixth career pinch homer, a two-run shot off Ryan Franklin (6-6) with two outs in the ninth, tied it at 6. Reds pinch hitters were 3-for-3 in the ninth while handing the Cardinals their 31st blown save, tied with the Mariners for the most in the majors.

Felipe Lopez singled off Bill Bray (2-2) for his third hit with one out in the 10th, Pujols walked and Mike Lincoln hit Ryan Ludwick on a 1-2 pitch before Glaus hit a towering drive to medium center, scoring Lopez easily.

Pujols' 36th homer in the fifth was a massive drive well over the visitor's bullpen in left field. He also singled twice and walked twice to raise his average four points to .357 in a late, longshot bid for his second batting title. He's eight points behind the Braves' Chipper Jones (.365).

Kim leads Garcia at Tour Championship

ATLANTA (AP)—Thanks to the cup, the Tour Championship finally might be worth watching.

No, not the FedEx Cup.

Six days after Anthony Kim routed Sergio Garcia in the opening singles match at the Ryder Cup, two of golf's most dynamic young players square off again in the third round at East Lake.

Kim had to settle for a 1-under 69 on Friday after making bogey from the bunker, giving him a two-shot lead over Garcia and putting them in the final pairing Saturday at the Tour Championship.

This is not match play. There are 36 holes remaining. At stake is $1.26 million, not a 17-inch gold trophy to share. Besides, it was only a month ago that they played together the first two rounds of the PGA Championship.

Even so, the fact they are playing together so close to the Ryder Cup figures to bring the Tour Championship to life.

"We had one day of golf - really, 14 holes of golf," Kim said, trying to downplay the pairing and instead drawing laughter for his veiled reference of a 5-and-4 victory at Valhalla.

Kim was at 7-under 133, and while he will have a 2-up lead of sorts on Saturday at East Lake, the momentum might lie with Garcia. He was 4 over through his first six holes of the tournament, rallied for a 70, then followed that with nearly flawless play for a 65.

Not to be forgotten was Kim's tag-team partner from the Ryder Cup - Phil Mickelson, who ran off five birdies over the last seven holes for a 68 that put him three shots behind.

And there's more at stake than just a big check and an elite title for the winner. Mickelson, Garcia and Kim are the top contenders to win the Vardon Trophy for the lowest adjusted scoring average on the PGA Tour.

AP

Anthony Kim hits out of the bunker to the 18th green during the second day of The Tour Championship PGA golf tournament, Friday, Sept. 26, 2008, in Atlanta.

"We still have a lot of golf left this weekend that will probably decide it," Mickelson said.

They were among six players in the 30-man field who managed to break par over two days, joined by Camilo Villegas (66) at 2-under 138, and K.J. Choi (70) and Mike Weir (69) at 139.

Even without their recent Ryder Cup history, Kim and Garcia are two of golf's young stars. Both can energize the crowd with their personalities, and they are loaded with talent.

Both consider the Ryder Cup history.

"It's Saturday of the Tour Championship," Garcia said. "It's a totally different event. Tomorrow is an important day to give yourself a chance on Sunday. You're not going to win the tournament tomorrow unless you shoot 52."

Kim, whose opening 64 was eight shots better than the field average, looked as though he might go even lower when he stuffed his approach inside 3 feet on the first hole and hit two more approaches inside 6 feet through five holes.

But he made enough mistakes—a pair of three-putt bogeys on the front nine—to keep enough players in range.

"I feel pretty positive about shooting under par on this golf course and not feeling like I got a lot out of my game," he said.

Ernie Els played in the final group with Kim and was trying to stay with him until pulling his tee shot into the water on the 17th and taking double bogey, sending him to a 71 to finish eight shots out of the lead.

"He's a good kid, a really good kid," Els said of the 23-year-old Kim. "He has a good attitude and he's got a lot of game. We need a good, younger player like him."

One difference Friday was using his caddie, Eric Larson, to line up his tee shots. Kim felt he was missing his mark by some 15 yards, and this freed him up to blast away.

"It worked out great," Kim said. "I feel like I'm on the LPGA Tour, but it doesn't matter. I'm playing good golf and making good swings."

Garcia didn't play all that badly Sunday in his loss to Kim except for a few bad drives on the front nine. He made only bogey at East Lake, chipping to firmly on the 18th hole and missing his par putt from about 10 feet.

The 28-year-old Spaniard fired off three straight birdies starting with a 9-iron into about 10 feet on the fifth, concluding his run with a 25-foot birdie on the seventh with perfect pace that brought a wry smile. Garcia also hit a delicate bunker shot for a short birdie on the par-5 ninth, and hammered a wedge to 2 feet of a tough pin on the 17th.

"If you miss the fairway, you're pretty much done," Garcia said. "Even from the fairway, it's still tough because the greens are so firm and so fast. But if you played well, you had a chance of getting on a roll, like I did."

Lurking was Mickelson, until his string of birdies at the end of the round.

Lefty won at East Lake in 2000, and he is starting to knock in enough putts to gain some confidence going into the weekend. Even so, he was intrigued by the two players ahead of him.

Jets list Favre as questionable for game vs Cards

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP)—Brett Favre was listed as questionable Friday for the New York Jets' game against Arizona with a sore left ankle, but is expected to start against the Cardinals.

The 38-year-old quarterback twisted his left ankle Monday night in New York's loss at San Diego. His ankle was tightly wrapped, but he appeared hardly hobbled during the half-hour of practice the media were allowed to watch Friday.

"I felt pretty comfortable a few days ago," coach Eric Mangini said of Favre's progress. "He hasn't missed many games in the last however many years."

Actually, Favre has started 256 consecutive regular-season games, an NFL record for quarterbacks, and neither he nor Mangini has seemed concerned the streak is in jeopardy.

With heavy rains drenching the area, the Jets held practice in their new fieldhouse for the first time. While special teams drills were the focus at the beginning of practice, Favre was at the far end of the field with the other quarterbacks and wide receivers going through light drills.

Favre was listed as limited at practice on the team's injury report for the third straight day, but his limp has decreased significantly since Monday night.

Meanwhile, nose tackle Kris Jenkins' balky back has also improved steadily throughout the week and Mangini also expects him to play Sunday. Jenkins missed most of the game against the Chargers and didn't participate in full practice activities Wednesday. He was limited Thursday and Friday, and was listed as questionable.

"I expect him to be ready to go," Mangini said.

Mangini said cornerback Justin Miller is also improving after missing the team's first three games with a foot injury. Miller was also questionable and could be a gametime decision.

AP

New York Jets quarterback Brett Favre is dragged down by San Diego Chargers' Jyles Tucker for a 12 yard loss during the third quarter of the Chargers' 48-29 victory in an NFL football game on Monday, Sept. 22, 2008 in San Diego.

Reggie Hodges is out with a strained left thigh, meaning Ben Graham will handle the punting duties for the second straight game after being cut and then re-signed a few days later following Hodges' injury. Kicker Mike Nugent is still out with a strained right thigh, so Jay Feely will start for the third consecutive game.

Arenas, Wizards fined by NBA after he skips media

WASHINGTON (AP)—Gilbert Arenas and the Washington Wizards were fined $15,000 apiece by the NBA on Friday after he ducked out of the team's annual preseason media day, avoiding any discussion of his third left knee operation in 1 1/2 years.

A few of his teammates who did speak at the event wondered aloud about when - and whether - their All-Star point guard would be back to his Agent Zero self on the court.

"I think probably everybody's worried about that. I think Gil's got to be worried about that," center Brendan Haywood said.

"It's one of those things. I want to see him bounce back and be the player he was when he averaged 30 points, six assists, and was one of the top five vote-getters in the Eastern Conference. I think he can get back there. The doctors all say he can get back there," Haywood added.

"But in the back of everybody's mind, you're a little worried: 'What if?'"

What if Arenas takes longer to return than the vague, December-or-January target he wrote about on his blog the day after last week's knee surgery?

What if when Arenas does return, it takes a while for him to get into shape?

What if when Arenas does get into shape, it takes a while for him to play at his best?

"One thing I'm expecting to happen is that when he comes back, we're going to see Gilbert this year, but we probably won't see Agent Zero until the end of the season," forward Antawn Jamison said, "or maybe towards next year."

Arenas has yet to answer any questions in front of a group of reporters since his $111 million, six-year contract was announced in July. His first public discussion of his latest surgery was supposed to come Friday, but he was the only Wizards player the media wasn't able to talk to at the team's arena.

He did show up long enough to pose for photographs, but the team said Arenas cited his knee rehab work in declining to speak. Instead, a Wizards spokesman said, Arenas will address the media Saturday, when the team opens training camp in Richmond, Va.

CNMI starts bid in Oceania youth caging today

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI Men's and Women's Junior Nationals will begin their bid in the 7th FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament today at the University of Guam Fieldhouse in Mangilao.

The Women's Junior Nationals will debut against Tahiti, an opening assignment that gave coach Elias Rangamar a relief, as the French colony is not that tough as Australia.

Rangamar's wards in the first schedule released by organizers were supposed to duel the defending champion in the first round. But in the new schedule, the CNMI Women's Junior Nationals will meet the Opals last after their second game against Fiji.

The CNMI Women's Junior Nationals are composed of Dion Diaz, Glorily Williams, Jacqueline Wonenberg, Li'Amwar Rangamar, Mercedes Mesa, Nicole Lebria, Nikita Hofschneider, Noelle Calvo, and Yvette and Yvonne Bennett.

Tahiti's roster include All-Star member Alizee Lefranc, Haamoe Voirin, Heiura Nena, Herevaea Hamblin, Hinahei Itae-Taata, Oceeane Lefranc, Poenui Tehaamoana, Vairani Tehamoana, and Vanina Potiron.

The CNMI-Tahiti tiff will be played on Court 1 at 1pm.

In the nightcap after the tournament's opening ceremonies at 7pm, the CNMI Men's Junior Nationals will go up against host Guam.

Veteran coach Rufino Aguon will be calling the shots for the CNMI junior cagers and he expects the home crowd to play an important role in tonight's game.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The CNMI Junior Nationals' Marvin Rabauliman goes for a shot against Southern Sonics defenders during their game in the Rotary caging at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last month. The Junior Nationals are in Guam to compete in the FIBA Oceania youth caging.

"The crowd is always a factor but we must tune them out and just play our game. This is easier said than done but that's what we must do," Aguon said.

The CNMI Junior Nationals are composed of Jericho Cruz, Jayvan Tarkong, Allen Moses, Marvin Rabauliman, Jomar Tumaquip, James Camacho, Joseph White, Jose Castro, Bill Babauta, and Antonio Borja.

Aguon is not setting expectations from his boys, as he wanted them to just play how they were thought to play.

"This is our boys' first and this is an elite tournament, nothing our boys are use to. But if they play hard and smart, who knows?" Aguon said.

Guam played in last year's FIBA youth caging in New Zealand and finished sixth among the eight teams. New Zealand won the men's division, beating Australia.

This year's Guam youth team is composed of Albert Andrea, Brandon Cardines, Christian Afaisn, Derrick Roysten, Domonic Sablan, Ervin Jose, John-Edie Mose, Kurt Carter, Mychal Borja, and Norvin Garduque.

Other games on the opening day tonight are (men's): Palau vs. Australia; Tahiti vs. Fiji; and PNG vs. New Caledonia; (women's): Palau vs. PNG; Australia vs. Fiji; and Guam vs. New Caledonia.

The eight teams in the men's and women's divisions are divided into two pools with squads having three games each in the pool play. All four teams will advance to the playoffs, which will have a double-elimination format.

Minor gains more confidence, toughness

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior tennis player Thea Minor had a fruitful two-week stay in New Caledonia gaining more confidence and toughness which she needs in future off-island tournaments.

"I had a great experience in New Caledonia," said Minor, who returned to Saipan last week after competing in tournaments in Lifoi and Noumea.

Besides participating in two tournaments in the French territory, Minor also trained with New Caledonia players and coaches.

"The training in New Caledonia is very stringent. You wake up early and run six kilometers non-stop and return in the afternoon for footwork workout and pickup games," Minor said.

"But it was all worth it as the training and tournament in New Caledonia added toughness in my game and gave me more confidence," the 13-year-old netter said.

"I learned a lot from the coaches and the players. One of them is footwork which is a key factor in your game. Training and playing in New Caledonia taught me to play smart inside the court and be more aggressive.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Thea Minor holds the trophy she and her Pacific Oceania teammates won in Lifoi, New Caledonia.

In Lifoi in the Provincial Islands of New Caledonia, Minor played in a Davis Cup-style tournament and together with her teammates in the Pacific Oceania squad, they won the team championship.

Minor said playing against New Caledonia players was tough, as her opponents were the qualifiers in the provincial tournaments

"New Caledonian players are tall, talented and very competitive," she said adding New Caledonia players also work out in gyms to boost their upper body strength.

Working out or engaging in sports is part of New Caledonia's healthy lifestyle, according to Minor.

"Most of the people there are into daily routine exercises. You can see them biking, roller blading, walking with therir dogs and running. For them, a healthy lifestyle is very important," Minor said.

After competing in Lifoi, the CNMI netter traveled to New Caledonia's capital city, Noumea, and joined two age group divisions of the Open Jeunes 2008 at TC Olympique.

She made it into the semis of the girls' 13-14 age group and the 17-18 division.

Minor prevailed against New Caledonia players in early rounds before losing to her Pacific Oceania teammates in the Final Four.

Thea's parents and coaches, Boyet and Joy are proud of their daughters' semis finish in a tournament in New Caledonia.

"Making it into the semifinals was an accomplishment for Thea. Based on the scores, she was not beaten easily," Joy said.

Minor lost to Fiji's Annie Shanon in the first set, 7-5, and 6-4 in the second. Against Maria Tere Apisah, also of Fiji, Minor dropped the first set, 1-6, but gave her foe a tough ride in the second before bowing, 6-7.

"Thea's opponents know that every point they will score against her, they have to earn it. Thea's opponents in the semi-finals are her teammates, these girls are very competitive and consistent, and are staying in the ITF training center in Fiji," Boyet said.

Thea's parents believed all the things their daughter learned from New Caledonia will prepare her for her next journey—New Zealand.

Minor was invited to join the Pacific Oceania Touring Team in New Zealand for the second straight year. She, Rafael Jones and Christian Miller will be battling Australian and New Zealand players in three tournaments in December.

KABIRIEL

From Page 28

Oshima Berger said.

Monica Yamaguchi was third, clocking in 2:01.44.

Rounding out the finishers for the half marathon were Tamio Nishikido (1:49.38), Louie Tenorio (1:58.09), 2006 champion Yoshi Suzuki (2:00.22), Keum Bae Ji (2:00.37), Florian Braig (2:02.54), Joshua Berger (2:06.13), Andrea Ozawa (2:11.31), Nate Hawley (2:12.08), Kanae Quinn (2:12.09), Renato Calage (2:24.22), Manny Sitchon (2:31.29), and Cesar Fortaleza (2:35.51).

In the Fun Run, Matt Mancao was the first finisher timing in at 26 minutes and 10 seconds, followed by Nate Mateo (28:34), and Fred Camacho (30:37).

Maui, Hawaii World Triathlon Championships-bound Mieko Carey clocked 29:48 to lead the women's side. Melody Matson was second in 39:03 and Kathy Pagapular was third in 39:38.

Other finishers were Shogo Ando (31:58), Russ Quinn (33:21), Kenyon Shultz (34:48), John Auther (34:54), Owen Crabbie (34:59), Rob Shultz (36:20), Yihao Liang (37:53), Harumi Sugihashi (39:40), Isumi Yamaguchi (40:32), John Jenkins (48:22), George David (49:29), Bernard Hoftshneider (49:30), Madison Shultz (50:59), Xiao Xia Long (1:00:39), Jennifer Backhaus (1:02:32), Becca Yost (1:14:22), and Megan Yost (1:14:23).

Megan Yost was the youngest competitor at eight years old.

Organizer Brad Ruzala said that despite failing to hit their target of 200 participants, the turnout was still good.

The event was sponsored by POWERade, Coca-Cola, Foremost, Subway, Glimpses, Beach Road Magazine, PTI, Taga Inc., Tagaman, Saipan XTERRA, Pacific Islands Club, The Athlete's Foot, All-Star Sports, JG Sablan Ice & Water, Michelob Ultra Wear-A-Marconi, Musician John Jenkins and www.shopmarianas.com, and Marianas Visitors Authority.

Marianas High School's National Honor Society volunteered for the event.

WABOL

From Page 28

The day's lowest net score was 68, owned by Ladies Flight champion Soo Jeong Ku, who is a 14 handicapper. She recorded a 41 on the front and back nines for a gross of 82.

E. Chang, who had a 26 handicap, was second with her 69, while Kim Yang, was third with her 76.

A record total of 85 participants joined the tournament, which was a fundraising event of the Kristo Rai Parish Church.

Fr. Glen Ragsag said proceeds would be used for operational expenses of the parish, and he expressed the Parish Council's appreciation to participants, volunteers, and donors, for the huge success of the tournament.

Organizers are still finalizing the exact amount of the funds raised.

Last year, about $10,000 was netted for the same cause.

Tournament coordinator Margaret Dela Cruz said that aside from $8,500 collected from the registration fee, there were other donations in cash and in kind from individuals and companies.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Tampa Bay	96	64	.600	_
y-Boston	94	66	.588	2
New York	88	72	.550	8
Toronto	85	75	.531	11
Baltimore	67	92	.421	28 1/2

Central Division

Minnesota	87	73	.544	_
Chicago	86	73	.541	1/2
Cleveland	80	80	.500	7
Kansas City	74	86	.463	13
Detroit	73	86	.456	13 1/2

West Division

x-Los Angeles	99	61	.619	_
Texas	78	82	.488	21
Oakland	75	84	.472	23 1/2
Seattle	59	101	.369	40

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	90	70	.563	_
New York	88	72	.550	2
Florida	83	76	.522	6 1/2
Atlanta	71	89	.444	19
Washington	59	100	.371	30 1/2

Central Division

x-Chicago	96	63	.604	_
Milwaukee	89	71	.556	8 1/2
Houston	85	74	.535	11
St. Louis	84	76	.525	12 1/2
Cincinnati	74	86	.43	22 1/2
Pittsburgh	66	94	.413	30 1/2

West Division

x-Los Angeles	83	77	.519	_
Arizona	80	80	,500	3
Colorado	74	86	.463	9
San Francisco	71	89	.444	12
San Diego	62	98	.388	21

x-clinched division
y-clinched playoff spot

Yesterday's Games.
Toronto 3, Baltimore 0
1/2 innings, rain
Detroit 6, Tampa Bay 4
Kansas City 8, Minnesota 1
Cleveland 11, Chicago White Sox 8
Texas 12, L.A. Angels 1
N.Y. Yankees 19, Boston 8
Seattle 10, Oakland 8
Philadelphia 8, Washington 4
Florida 6, N.Y. Mets 1
St. Louis 7, Cincinnati 6
Houston 5, Atlanta 4
Milwaukee 5, Chicago Cubs 1
Pittsburgh 6, San Diego 3
Arizona 6, Colorado 4
San Francisco 6,
L.A. Dodgers 5, 10 innings

TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

ATLANTA (AP)—Scores Friday from the U.S. Tour Championship, a $7 million (4.8 million) U.S. PGA Tour event at the 7,304-yard, par-70 East Lake Golf Club:

SECOND ROUND

Anthony Kim	64	69	133
Sergio Garcia	70	65	135
Phil Mickelson	68	68	136
Camilo Villegas	72	66	138
K.J. Choi	69	70	139
Mike Weir	70	69	139
Ben Curtis	71	69	140
Robert Allenby	75	66	141
Andres Romero	73	68	141
Trevor Immelman	68	73	141
Ernie Els	68	73	141
Justin Leonard	73	69	142
Dudley Hart	73	69	142
Jim Furyk	72	70	142
Kevin Sutherland	71	71	142
Stuart Appleby	72	71	143
Billy Mayfair	72	71	143
D.J. Trahan	71	72	143
Briny Baird	74	71	145
Chad Campbell	72	73	145
Bubba Watson	71	74	145
Ken Duke	77	69	146
Ryuji Imada	75	72	147
Vijay Singh	73	74	147
Carl Pettersson	76	72	148
Stewart Cink	75	73	148
Steve Stricker	74	74	148
Hunter Mahan	74	75	149
Kenny Perry	76	75	151
Tim Clark	78	74	152

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kim leads Garcia at Tour Championship

Thanks to the cup, the Tour Championship finally might be worth watching.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Rays clinch AL East title after Red Sox loss

The Tampa Bay Rays won their first AL East title late Friday night when the Boston Red Sox lost to the New York Yankees, 8-19.

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Kabiriel tops Banzai half marathon, Berger wins anew

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Tournament organizer Brad Ruzala, left, joins the top finishers of yesterday's 3rd Annual Banzai Memorial Half Marathon and Fun Run at the Banzai Cliff in Marpi.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ, JR.

Fun Run winners, Matt Mancao, left, and Mieko Carey.

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel's time finally came after runner-up finishes in the past two years, while Mamiko Oshima-Berger set a new record and won her third straight women's title in yesterday's 3rd Annual Banzai Memorial Half Marathon and Fun Run at the Banzai Cliff in Marpi.

Kabiriel set a personal best in the men's division, as he eclipsed by a mere fraction of a second his old mark of one hour, 31 minutes, 51 seconds last year with a new time of 1:31.50. Kabiriel's new personal best, however, was way behind the current record of 1:18.10 set by Eli Torgeson last year.

Fondly called on Saipan as the "Road Runner Bunny", Kabiriel placed second in the 2006 and 2007 stagings of the same event.

A total of 18 runners completed the 19-mile (20-kilometer) trail via the jungle at Banzai Cliff.

Kabiriel said the race was not as challenging compared to last year's because of Torgeson's absence.

"I really prepared because I wanted to challenge the winner last year," said Kabiriel.

Ronald Villafria was second with his 1:41.55 and Yosh Gabaldon was third after posting 1:44.27.

In the women's division, Oshima-Berger triumphed for the third straight time, setting a new record of 1:35.27.

"I'm really happy," said Berger, who erased her old mark of 1:38.09 in 2006.

Oshima-Berger, who wore an MP3 during the race, said this might have been her lucky charm. She was wearing it in 2006 and forgot to bring it last year, when she was slower in 1:41.46.

"It was pretty cold. But when you run in this kind of weather, you have a nice view along the way. And if you have a nice music, it really helps a lot," said Berger, who is eyeing a win in the Saipan Marathon in January next year.

She is also preparing for the 100k Hell of Marianas Bike Race in December.

Oshima-Berger credited her win to running partner Maimi shimizu, who came in second with a time of 1:35.27.

"She kept on pushing me,"

See KABIRIEL on Page 27

Wabol prevails in Kristo Rai golf tournament

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Jess Wabol won his second straight tournament in two weeks after following his game plan and getting some good breaks.

"It was just one of the lucky days. You just have to go your way. Maybe I was just well-rested," said Wabol after winning the Championship Flight of the 3rd Annual Kristo Rai Parish Golf Tournament at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort in Kagman.

Wabol carded a 3-under par 69 to win by three shots over runner-up Rick Kautz, who submitted an even par 72.

Both players made a 35 on the front nine, but Wabol closed out with a 34 on the back while Kautz slowed down with a 37.

Joji Taguchi came in third with his 3-over par 75 (43-36).

"It was a good competition. Aside from going there and playing well, you also need some good breaks," said Wabol, who finished only third last year, scoring a 77.

On Sept. 20, Wabol led his team to a title win in the 13th Annual Club at the Hyatt Golf Classic.

He is looking for his third win in a row next month as he plans to join a fund-raising tournament for the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association on Oct. 12.

Kautz is hoping to recover in his next tournament and do to this, he said he needs to be steady on his long drives and keep his shots within the fairways and on the greens.

Kautz won last year's A Flight.

The top three finishers for the A Flight this year were Francis San Nicolas (79), Ed Manglona (80), and Frank Castro (80).

In the B Flight, the winners were Juan Lizama (82), Ken. Kalen (83), and Fr. Manny Corcuera (83).

Corcuera won a special prize of $270 for making the day's closest shot to the pin.

He made his mark on Hole No. 3, with a distance of about five feet and 11 inches.

The winners for C Flight were Jerry Ayuyu (85), M. Sablan (89), and Ruogi Takeshi (90) while the top three finishers in the Seniors Flight were Manny Alvarez (75), Ed Manibusan (75), and Nick Sablan (76).

See WABOL on Page 27

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Jess Wabol, left, receives the Championship Flight trophy from Kristo Rai Church Parish Council president Joe Itibus in yesterday's award ceremony for the 3rd Annual Kristo Rai Parish Golf Tournament at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort in Kagman.

OFF THE BENCH

By BOB COLDEEN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Coldeen is a longtime journalist in the CNMI and is currently the news director of KSPN2

A born rock thrower

As a member of the Society for American Baseball Research, I have accumulated some interesting history. One item I picked up was a 1948 booklet published by the Cleveland News that contained oral interviews with Satchel Paige, arguably the greatest pitcher of all time.

Satchel, who got that nickname because as a young boy he could tote more satchels than any other bag handler at the Mobile, Alabama train depot, explains, "I was called Satchel because first they saw the satchels – then they saw me."

He tells the story of being a kid in a gang.

"We had the best sham battlin' crew in Mobile Bay and I was known as the straightest brick thrower in Mobile.

"Y'understand now, I didn't learn to be a brick thrower. It was born in me.

"I was born with speed and control. I came into the world with both right from the start. Course I didn't realize I had a gift till I began to pitch professional baseball, but I shoulda known early. I shoulda known when I throwed my first brick.

"If the fellow I was throwin' at hid behind a tree or pole, I'd get him anyhow, long as he left a little backside stickin' out. And if they hid complete I'd wait 'til they did a little peekin', then wham, I got my man.

"You won't believe it, but I learned my hesistation pitch throwin' bricks. If a man was throwin' at you, you wouldn't just stand there, you'd duck. But if a man started to throw and you ducked, and then he stopped, where would you be?

"Why you'd be standin' there duckin' with your bare face, ready to be bongoed big as you please.

"That's exactly how I studied my hesitation pitch. I start my throw. The target ducks, I hesitate. He's still duckin'. Wham, I got my man.

"Years later, after some of my pitchin' speed wore out, I remembered that old fooler hesitation pitch.

"Now I know I ain't shy, and I know you ain't goin' to believe what I say right now, but this is fact: When I went swimmin' with my gang, the Oakdale School crowd didn't throw no bricks at us. Those Oakdale boys knew I was the best brick thrower in Mobile.

"So did the lady truant officer. I should remember her name 'cause she came 'round to my house so often. But I don't. All I remember is we called her Mrs. Police. She would come to our homes and report "So and so is down throwin' bricks at the mules and chickens."

"Had to keep our arms sharp, y'understand.

"But I never got in no serious trouble. Knocked a few fellows unconscious, but nothin' serious. I know there's lotsa head knots runnin' round Mobile right now that I helped raise.

"When I stang those fellows then, they didn't like me nohow.

"Know what they say now? They show the knot and say, nice and proud, "See this lump—Satchel grew it."

"Keeps their hats from flyin' off."